THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • MONDAY • FEBRUARY 01, 2021 • ₹7.00 • PAGES 32 • LATE CITY EDITION

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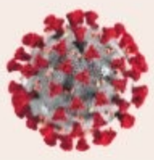

1 IN EVERY 4 INDIANS EXPOSED TO CORONAVIRUS: SEROSURVEY

25% of the population has shown evidence of past infection of Covid19, the third national serosurvey done by ICMR has revealed

CITIES CLOSE TO ACHIEVING HERD IMMUNITY?

The survey estimates India's actual Covid-19 infection size at 30 crore though the number of confirmed cases stands at just over 1 crore. "The figures are much higher in many cities, strengthening the epidemiological theory that some cities may be approaching herd immunity as evident in the falling daily numbers of new cases," an official told TNIE | **P7**

EPIDEMIC TO WEAKEN AT 70% EXPOSURE

- The serosurvey carried out in Dec and Jan tested blood samples of 400 randomly selected persons from 70 districts across 22 states
- Scientists and researchers in many countries have estimated that the coronavirus epidemic will slow down rapidly when 60-70% of the population in an area gets exposed to the virus and recovers

37,44,334

VACCINATED AGAINST COVID AS ON SUNDAY, ACCORDING TO UNION HEALTH MINISTRY

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

COMMITTED TO PM's DIGNITY, KISAN's SELF-RESPECT: TIKAIT

Modi says country saddened by insult to the Tricolour at Red Fort on Republic Day

Farmers raise slogans during their ongoing protest against the new farm laws, at the Singhu border, in Delhi on Sunday | SHEKHAR YADAV

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi said his government was just a phone call away to talk to the farmers' unions, the Tikait brothers said they will honour Modi's dignity while also being committed to protecting their self-respect.

Bharatiya Kisan Union leaders Naresh and Rakesh Tikait said they were open to talks to find a middle path, but their definition of a middle ground was different from what the Centre has in mind. "Talks are necessary. A solution should be found. These farmers have been protesting for over two months now.... The middle path could be that the Centre assures farmers it won't implement the three laws during its tenure. We will also try convincing the farmers," Naresh said.

As for Rakesh Tikait, he said farmers would not succumb to pressure but they don't want the government or Parliament to 'bow down to them' either, adding they respect Modi's dignity. Rakesh demanded the release of farmer leaders to prepare a conducive environment for talks.

While the Tikaits are part of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of farmers' unions, their position was more nuanced than the blunt statements of the morcha so far.

The morcha on Sunday formed a committee to trace those who went missing after the Republic Day tractor rally. In his *Mann Ki Baat* radio broadcast, Modi expressed dismay over the riots that day and the 'insult' to the Tricolour by a mob that had entered the Red Fort complex to plant a religious flag. The Tikait brothers echoed him but saw a plot in the violence.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Police sent over 50 fresh notices to people, including farmer leaders, officials said. Police said some tractors used during the violence have been identified and notices were sent to their owners.

The police are also conducting investigations at several locations outside Delhi, including Punjab and Haryana, to locate the people involved in the riots. **P7**

Another senior journalist booked by UP Police

The UP Police lodged an FIR against *The Wire*'s editor Siddharth Varadarajan who had tweeted the story of the family of Navreet Singh, a protester who died on Republic Day. The family disputed the police claim that he died after his tractor rammed a barricade

Suspension of internet undemocratic: Morcha

The morcha condemned the arrests of journalists, and the suspension of internet services at protest sites. "It (govt) is also fearful of the coordinated work of the farmers' unions across different protest sites... This is undemocratic and illegal," it said in a statement

WOULD FM TICK THESE CHECKBOXES TODAY?

BUDGET 2021-22

We can see a Budget which is a budget like never before. 100 years of India wouldn't have seen a Budget being made post-pandemic like this

FM Nirmala Sitharaman during her address to the CII Partnership Summit 2020 on January 5

11:00 am
Budget presentation begins

- ☐ No radical change in income tax slabs, but expect some tax breaks for the salaried class
- ☐ Budget may increase tax rebate under Section 80C and 80D from **₹1.5 L** to **₹2 L**
- ☐ Standard deduction limit likely to be doubled to **₹1 Lakh** increasing the exemption for health expenses
- ☐ Higher tax rebate likely for first-time home buyers
- ☐ Government to fix some anomalies in the National Pension Scheme with regard to income tax benefits
- ☐ Covid-19 cess to raise revenue on the cards
- ☐ Increasing tax on long-term capital gains from equity and property is a possibility
- ☐ Further increase in import duty on sin goods and luxury items
- ☐ Spending more on health infrastructure is a given, by how much more is the question
- ☐ Budget is likely to set up a separate bank for infrastructure sector
- ☐ More privatisation drive of PSUs, privatisation of electricity distribution expected
- ☐ Substantial increase in defence outlay to deal with a belligerent China
- ☐ Atmanirbhar overdrive to push indigenisation and accelerate growth

₹1,19,847 cr January GST collection, the highest monthly mop-up so far. Came as a sentiment booster a day before the Budget

K'taka pins hopes on Central dues

ANUSHA RAVI @ Bengaluru

WITH Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman all set to present the Union Budget for 2021-2022 on Monday, Karnataka is hoping to get its dues in Central grants as well as proportionate infrastructure funding.

While earlier in January, the state's representative on the GST Council and Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai had apprised Nirmala Sithaaraman about the state's expectations, officials in the government hope there are no cuts in fund allocation to the state in the form of centrally-sponsored projects, grant-in aids, devolution of funds from the 15th Finance Commission, GST compensation and big-ticket infrastructure projects.

"We expect the Centre to allocate our share of funds to us in the Budget. We are also hopeful of policy decisions on ease of doing business, simplification, relaxation for industries, reforms in licensing and registration, encouragement for entrepreneurship," said Deputy CM Dr C N Ashwath Narayan. **P5**

Sasikala leaves hospital in car with AIADMK flag

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

V K Sasikala greets supporters as she leaves Victoria Hospital in Bengaluru on Sunday | SHRIRAM BN

EXPELLED AIADMK leader V K Sasikala, who was a close associate of former Tamil Nadu CM J Jayalalithaa, was given a rousing welcome by hundreds of her supporters at Victoria Hospital, from where she was discharged around noon on Sunday. Interestingly, the SUV ferrying her had an AIADMK flag. After a week's stay at a resort on the outskirts of the city, Sasikala will head to Tamil Nadu, where Assembly elections will be held in a few months.

Soon after the news of her discharge from the hospital was confirmed, over 200 supporters gathered at the hospital around 9 am to welcome her. They were holding photos of Jayalalithaa and Sasikala. Around 11 am, Sasikala's nephew T T V Dinakaran entered the hospital and almost an hour later, Sasikala was driven out of the hospital. By this time, almost a thousand people had gathered. Some had come from as far as Kanyakumari.

Wearing a mask and gloves, Sasikala waved to her supporters from the car and bowed to them with folded hands. They welcomed her by showering flowers on the car, chanting 'Vazhga Chinnamma' (Hail Chinnamma). Some also smashed pumpkins to ward off any evil eye on their leader.

A convoy of 7-8 cars followed Sasikala's vehicle, which, according to her followers, was the same one which was used by Jayalalithaa. As the SUV moved from Victoria Hospital towards KR Market Junction, around 10 private bodyguards ran alongside the vehicle while some of them clung on to it. **P5**

SIDE-EFFECTS

Immunity boosters for children not advisable, say docs

IFFATH FATHIMA @ Bengaluru

WITH parents scouting for immunity boosters for their children in the hope of keeping Covid-19 at bay, pharmacies have seen a spike in demand. But experts warn that it could do more harm than good to those aged below five — including inducing conditions like arthritis and rheumatism at an earlier stage in life.

With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, many worried parents have been asking health professionals for immunity-boosting supplements, like vitamin C, D and zinc supplements for children. But experts say a well-balanced meal for children between 0-5 years of age is more than enough to give them adequate immunity.

They warn that apart from early arthritis and rheumatism, children can be vulnerable to side-effects like severe mouth ulcers, fever, disturbance in growth, red eyes and muscle pain. Children should not have lesser or higher immunity, but adequate immunity is what is important, the point out. **P3**

WITH THIS ISSUE — THE ESSENTIAL CAMPUS DIGEST edex YOUR LIFE COACH — 32 PAGES, INCLUDING 16 OF edex (TABLOID) & 4 of City Express

HOLY COW!

Wrestling body gifted buffalo worth ₹1.5 lakh

FIROZ MIRZA @ Chennai

RECEIVING weird gifts for their accomplishments is not new for athletes. Tennis legend Roger Federer was gifted a cow, not once but twice, by the Swiss Open Gstaad. The 23rd Senior Women's National Wrestling Championship in Agra on Sunday witnessed a similar incident, but this time it's the governing body that ended up with the gift.

In its bid to felicitate the best wrestler of the tournament, a sponsor on Sunday offered to gift a buffalo worth around ₹1.5 lakh. With the event not having an award in that category, the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) decided to accept the gift on behalf of the wrestlers. "A local sponsor wanted to gift the buffalo to the best wrestler. Given the format in which the competition was being organised, every weight category (total 10) has a gold winner so it was not possible to pick the best among them," Vinod Tomar, WFI's assistant secretary, told this daily. After much deliberation, the animal was eventually gifted to WFI, he added. Sources claimed that around ₹15,000 was spent only on the decoration of the buffalo that was brought to the venue with much fanfare.

So what's next? Even the federation is not sure what to do with the gift.

A WFI source revealed that the animal might be transported to WFI's headquarters in New Delhi. The federation runs its office from president Brijbhushan Sharan Singh's official residence in Delhi. Singh is a BJP MP from Kaiserganj, Uttar Pradesh.

The buffalo which was gifted to the Wrestling Federation of India in Agra on Sunday | SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

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ALMANAC TODAY

• Monday: 01/02/2021 • Year: Sarvari • Ayana: Uttharayana
• Ritu: Himantha • Masa: Pausha • Paksha: Krishna • Tithi: Chaturthi 8.12 pm
• Nakshatra: Utthara Phalguni 1.56 am • Moon in Tula Rashi • Rahukaala: 07:30 am to 09:00 am
• Gulikakala: 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm • Yamaganda: 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

WEATHER

MIN 17°C | MAX 28°C

FORECAST: Clearing skies

Sunrise	6.45 am
Sunset	6.20 pm
Moonrise	9.47 pm
Moonset	9.30 am

Look at Musk... Think crazy, don't bother about failures: ISRO chief

ISRO Chairman K Sivan at the 55th annual convocation of Bangalore University

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

ENCOURAGING students to aim for the stars, ISRO Chairman K Sivan said, "I learnt a valuable lesson — life and career are not about making the best choices, but about making the best of the opportunities available to you."

Speaking at the 55th annual convocation ceremony of Bangalore University on Saturday, Sivan said, "I also understood that when something is denied to you, something bigger is waiting for you."

He told students to shoot for the moon and if they miss, they would land among the stars.

Narrating anecdotes from his life, he said, "I never got what my first choice was — be it Engineering (he ended up studying BSc - Mathematics first), or wanting to join ISRO's Satellite Centre at URSC, Bengaluru, but ending up at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre." There too, he said, he wanted to join the Aerodynamics Group, but ended up in the PSLV project.

Talking about the success of India's space programme, Sivan mentioned, "I can say with great confidence that India's (space) programme is built on spectacular failures. Each failure has resulted in improvements in our system."

"I was working on a conventional system, but my guide said always think wildly," he further said, adding that the technological and scientific breakthroughs originate from crazy ideas.

"How did Elon Musk become famous? Because of his crazy ideas. Please don't bother about failures, think crazy," he reiterated.

'GREEN PROPULSION THE WAY FORWARD'

ISRO is developing green propulsion for the human space flight mission, said ISRO Chairman K Sivan. He added that all propulsion stages may adopt this system going forward. He also stated that the space agency has carried out technology transfer of space-grade lithium-ion batteries to the industry. "This technology is useful for mass adoption of electric vehicles, without remaining perpetually dependent on foreign sources," he said.

SCHOOL REOPEN

Parents call off stir, fee still sticky issue

Minister Suresh Kumar last week announced 30% cut in tuition fee, but some pvt schools unwilling

PEARL MARIA D'SOUZA @ Bengaluru

PARENTS of schoolchildren, who had been protesting over the fee issue, have now decided to withdraw their stir after Primary and Secondary Education Minister S Suresh Kumar announced a 30 per cent cut in tuition fees. They are now pinning their hopes on the government order translating into reality and being enforced in CBSE and ICSE schools too.

Minister Suresh Kumar has said that nodal officers will be appointed to resolve any misgivings between school administrators and parents over the issue of fees.

Some of the parents told *The New Indian Express* that their wards were denied access to online classes even after paying part of the fees. In some cases, parents have even received emails about the schools' unwillingness to comply with the government order. In certain cases, schools are said to have taken an undertaking that the parents will pay the entire fees if the government order is revoked.

Ramesh, whose child is a student of a private unaided school in Yelahanka, says his ward's access to online classes has remained snapped since September as he had not paid the full fee. The apathy of the Education department only makes it worse, he added. Another parent said that when the school was contacted about the government circular, they claimed to have not received it yet. The parent said they had paid the first term, fee including transport fee.

On the other hand, a private school had communicated to a parent claiming that the government order on fee cut was applicable only for government and aided schools and that it had even been stayed by the high court. However, a top department official denied that there was any stay.

Meanwhile, the Recognised Unaided Private Schools Association (RUPSA), while showing solidarity with the government's decision on fee cut, demanded that the budgetary allocation of Rs 1,500 crore for education should be fully utilised. The president of the Managements of Independent CBSE Schools Association (MICSA), M Srinivasan, said they are discussing the government order and their response will be decided on Monday.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR COLLEGES

The Higher Education department has finalised the academic calendar for 2021-22 for undergraduate and post-graduate courses and released the timetable to colleges

1st Sem UG, PG and engineering courses to start on Oct 4

UG ENGINEERING

1st, 3rd, 5th semesters end by March 31. Exams end by April 31

7th semester ends by Feb 28. Exams end by March 31

8th semester ends by July 31. Exams end by Aug 31

Results by Sept 10

PG COURSES

1st semester ends by April 10. Exams end by April 30

2nd semester starts by May 2, ends by Aug 31. Exam ends by Sept 30

3rd semester ends by Feb 28. Exams end by March 31

4th semester starts by April 1, end by July 31. Exams end by Aug 31

Results by Sept 10

UG COURSES

1st, 3rd semesters end by March 31. Exams end by April 30

2nd, 4th semesters end by Aug 31. Exams end by Sept 30

5th semester ends by Feb 28. Exams end by March 31

6th semester ends by July 31. Exams end by Aug 31

Results by Sept 10

Classes 9, 11 to reopen today, lunch hours to be staggered

PEARL MARIA D'SOUZA @Bengaluru

WITH classes 9 and 11 set to reopen from Monday onwards in addition to classes 10 and 12 which reopened on January 1, the education department is planning to divide the lunch break to ensure social distancing is not compromised during meals.

Commissioner of Public Instruction Anbu Kumar informed The New Indian Express that lunch break would be divided into several parts for specific classes to ensure that all the students do not come together at the same time.

This is part of the measures that the department is planning to maintain physical distancing norms and a scientific manner to follow the existing standard operating procedures in the face of the pandemic, that too with a higher number of students returning to schools.

The department has decided not to come up with a fresh set of SOPs, but to innovate with the existing ones released for the reopening of classes 10 and 12.

Anbu Kumar said schools have already been approached about their capacity to accommodate students, and private schools have agreed they have enough rooms to accommodate a higher number of students spread out over more number of classrooms to ensure lesser crowding.

The department is expecting a turnout of less than 60 per cent to start with for classes 9 and 11. Officials said this would not require infrastructure to be beefed up further as several schools have primary school classrooms which are at present not in use as the children are taking lessons in the online mode. Plans entail using these rooms to spread out the higher number of students returning to offline mode of classes. And in case, that too falls short, halls and other rooms can be put into use, a senior department official said.

TEACHERS BEING TESTED IN B'LURU

In Bengaluru, teachers of Class 9 and 11 are being tested for Covid-19. This too is in keeping with the set norms of ensuring that no infected person enters the school threatening to spread the infection. BBMP Commissioner N Manjunath Prasad said that the increase in students will not impact social distancing norms in BBMP schools.

A flock of pelicans at Madiwala Lake in Bengaluru | EXPRESS

SANCTUARY TAG IDEAL FOR MADIWALA LAKE, BUT STUCK IN RED TAPE

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

IN a bid to protect water bodies and biodiversity, the Karnataka Forest Department has penned a letter to the State Government, requesting it to declare Madiwala Lake as a bird sanctuary and conservation reserve.

The department is also asking the BBMP to return the lake to it so that it can rejuvenate, protect and maintain the water body. The proposal has been drawn on the lines of Puttenahalli Lake in Yelahanka, the first and only lake in the city to be declared a bird conservation reserve.

Madiwala Lake is not part of the list prepared by BBMP for rejuvenation of water bodies under Bengaluru Mission 2022. It was not included as the BBMP lacks adequate funds to take up revival work of all lakes.

"The proposal was sent a fortnight ago, but there has been no response yet. We do not want the lake to be spoilt as it's a haven for many native and migratory birds. Only last week, forest department officials nabbed two people at the lake, with seven dead birds and a squirrel," a forest department official said.

The department had worked extensively with the previous Karnataka Lake Conservation and Development Authority, and Prof C R Babu — Professor Emeritus CEMDE, School of Environment Studies, University of Delhi, and former member of the Knowledge Commission — to develop the lake, create another mini pond towards Sarakki lake. A biodiversity park has also been created at Madiwala Lake under the guidance of Prof Babu. Many resident welfare associations had also joined hands with KLCDA to protect the water body.

Bengaluru Urban, Deputy Conservator of Forests, S S Ravishankar, said that the move was required, and the file was stuck between various departments.

BBMP DCF V Ranganatha Swamy said though the BBMP has funds for lake-related work, it will be better if the proposal is implemented by the forest department.

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

01st February: Mercury's magical alignments raise real questions about all today's meetings, plans and ideas. It will be almost impossible to work out who is talking sense and who is spreading nonsense. Perhaps the best way to look at today is as a time to throw all facts, opinions and attitudes into the melting pot and see what comes out!

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20) Today's lively Moon plays a helpful role, encouraging you to make the most of your material circumstances, which could mean making a few shrewd financial judgements. Happily you should find it that much easier to charm other people, even to wrap them around your little finger.

TAURUS (Apr. 21 - May 21) You will probably have a long way to go before you finally achieve a cherished goal, but that doesn't mean that you can't have instant success at least in little ways. The best means of impressing employers is to display a vast enthusiasm for the job!

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) Your regular cycles are partly dictated by Mercury, which represents your best and brightest ideas and which, just now, happens to be in a particularly sensitive state. Everyone should know that you must be allowed to day-dream to your heart's content.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) Do yourself a favour and get to grips with business affairs before it's too late. Even your emotional contentment revolves around joint financial arrangements, and a material tie could restrain your romantic happiness. That would do nobody any good, least of all you.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23) Today's lunar challenge to your sign suggests that partners may stand in opposition to your plans. You'll do best if you realise that criticism is not intended to wound, but does contain a germ of truth. Don't over-react, and do listen carefully.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23) The general picture favours work and extra energy in all matters. The message is therefore to stick to the straight and narrow. As far as personal relationships are concerned, realise that good feeling can only be maintained if you put in sufficient effort.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23) Please don't imagine that work and play are complete opposites. In fact, they're different sides of the same coin, and current indications are that work should be enjoyable and that leisure activities should require extra personal effort. That way lies a balanced and contented life!

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22) So much has happened in the home and family sphere that other people may be slightly confused or perplexed. You should therefore make allowances for the fact that their view of the world may be very different from yours. In other words, please don't jump to instant conclusions.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22) Sometimes you just have to come clean. This is a very useful moment indeed to say exactly what you feel, especially if family members have been burying their heads in the sand. At work, it's naturally also a very good time for interviews and applications, so prepare your case with care.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20) You need to dig deep to find the answer tall today's questions. The distant murmur of complaints about this and that may be beginning to irritate you, but try putting yourself in a partner's position so you can see exactly how they feel. And don't miss the point!

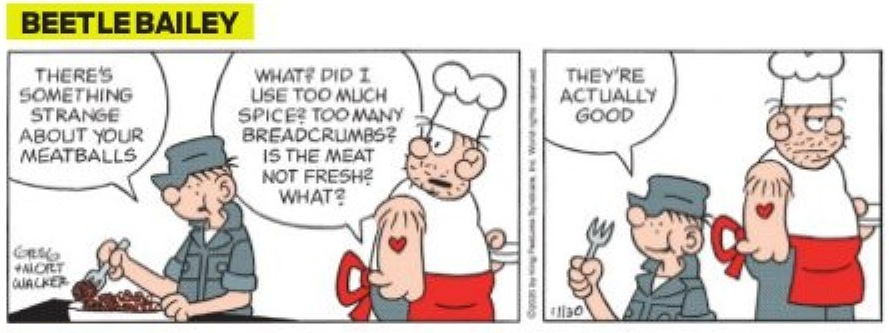
AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19) The Moon is especially active today, enhancing your control over contemporary events. You may therefore put your foot down at home and bring family members - and anyone else you live with - into line. But will they take any notice? That's another question!

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar 20) You may like to keep yourself to yourself today, and why not! Other people, especially those related to you, should learn to respect your privacy, and wait until you are ready to reveal your true intentions. When you talk, your words will be serious and well-considered.

THE PHANTOM

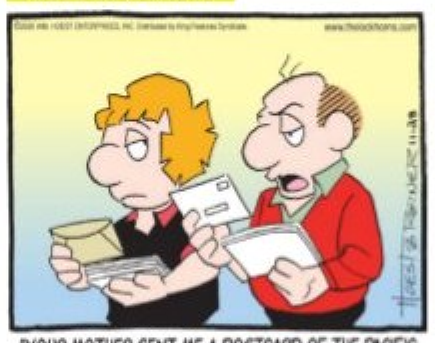
HI AND LOIS

BEETLE BAILEY



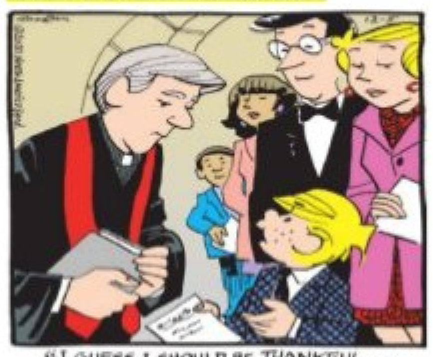
BLONDIE

LOCKHORNS



"YOUR MOTHER SENT ME A POSTCARD OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN... AND WROTE, 'WISH YOU WERE HERE.'"

DENNIS THE MENACE



"I GUESS I SHOULD BE THANKFUL THERE ARE ONLY TEN COMMANDMENTS."

Test your number crunching skill with our unique puzzle

SUDOKU

6	1				9	4		2
3				8			9	1
		4				7	8	
	6				7	9		8
1		3				5		6
7		9	8				1	
	4	1				3		
5	3			9				7
9		7	1				6	5

EASY

■ Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

■ Each sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing.

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

9	2	7	5	4	6	3	8	1
4	8	3	2	1	7	9	5	6
1	6	5	9	8	3	4	7	2
8	4	6	7	5	9	2	1	3
5	1	2	6	3	8	7	9	4
7	3	9	1	2	4	8	6	5
6	7	1	4	9	2	5	3	8
3	9	4	8	6	5	1	2	7
2	5	8	3	7	1	6	4	9

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TOCHL

KALYE

DESEYP

NUGLEO

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Ans. here:

(Answers Monday)

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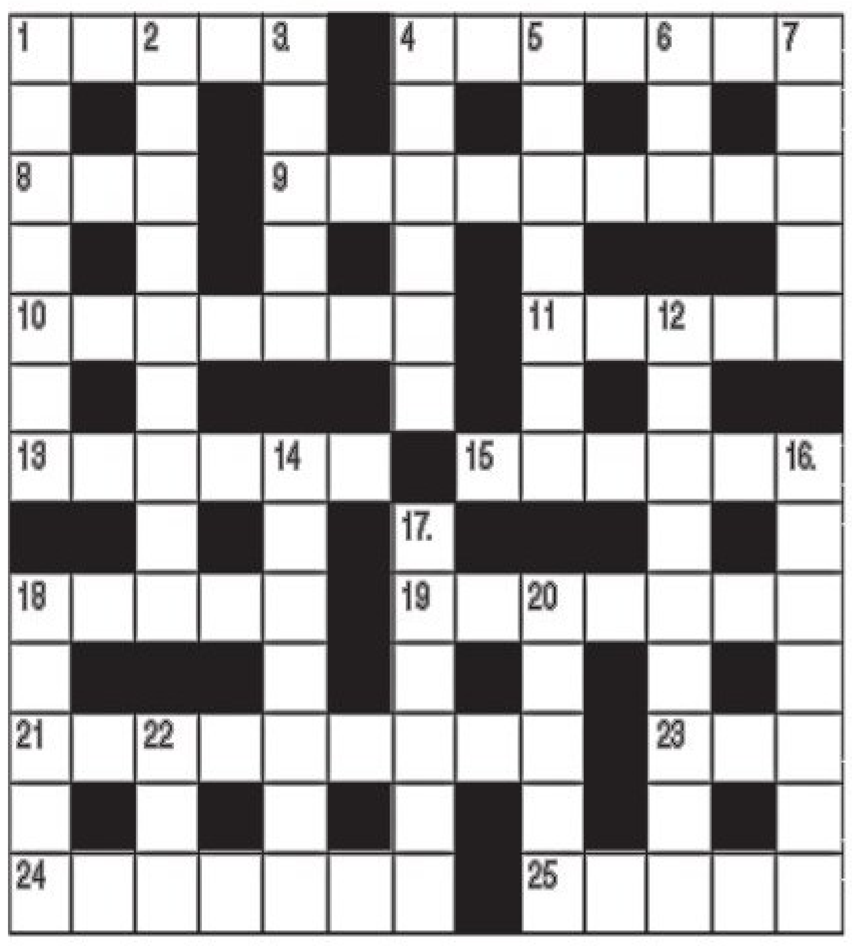
Saturday's Jumbles: COUCH SINGE AVIARY OUTLAW
Answer: After she learned to consistently tie her own shoes, — IT WAS A CINCH

CROSS WORD



ACROSS

1 There's not a single woman amongst them (5)
4 Read something aloud or acted it out (7)
8 Pitch into a sailor (3)
9 Press fastener? (9)
10 It's very hard to be the first man to take on a worker (7)
11 Emily is out to find an Englishman abroad (5)
13 Show around Venice (6)
15 Tasted peculiar and expressed an opinion (6)
18 Firearm part (5)
19 Steps taken by travellers (7)
21 It holds liquid of course (4,5)
23 Individual in the money (3)
24 Possibly reunite those who follow (7)
25 Left port with cargo (5)

DOWN

1 The strength of the current? (7)
2 Talented group of relatives (9)
3 A pie's turned brown (5)
4 Posted an order to headquarters (6)
5 Stays to endorse a number in some armour (7)
6 A law-breaking instrument (3)
7 Without occupation (5)
12 Timber which may be put to striking use? (9)
14 Reduce each damaged pen (7)
16 Pick out scattered cinders (7)
17 A girlfriend is blazing (6)
18 A prose form that provides a problem (5)
20 Delia's perfect form (5)
22 In short, last month was a bit of a painful time (3)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Alienation, 8 Lower, 9 Mission, 10 Cheeses, 11 Lisle, 12 Answer, 14 Prompt, 17 Delta, 19 Enthuse, 21 Erudite, 22 Pilot, 23 Signet ring.

Down: 2 Lawless, 3 Earns, 4 Almost, 5 Insular, 6 Nails, 7 Investment, 8 Lock and key, 13 Erasing, 15 Maudlin, 16 Serene, 18 Louts, 20 Toper.

Pulse Polio: 90.5% of kids given drops on Day One

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

THE state on Sunday launched the Pulse-Polio programme on Sunday and on the first day itself covered 90.5 per cent of the targeted children's population.

The state has slotted three days for the programme from January 31 to February 3. The total targeted children are 64,07,692, while 57,98,611 were given the drops on Day 1.

Among districts, Udupi topped with 99.44 coverage, followed by Mandya at 97.57 per cent, Uttar Kannada 96.52 per cent, Chamrajanagar 96.07 per cent and Bengaluru Urban 91.35 per cent.

The programme was launched by B S Yediyurappa at Krishna along with Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar. Yediyurappa and Dr Sudhakar gave the drops to a few children. Dr Sudhakar said, "More than 60 lakh children in the 0-5 year age group will get the vaccine in the state. To augment staff for this programme, the Covid vaccination drive has been temporarily stopped for four days. Mobile units have been launched. There has been no polio case in the country for the last 11 years, while neighbouring countries, like Pakistan and Afghanistan, are still not polio-free. The drive is being continued as a precautionary measure."

Revenue Minister R Ashoka and BBMP Commissioner Manjunatha Prasad visited H Siddhaiah Referral Hospital and started the programme by giving drops to a few children. In the BBMP limits, 12,84,392 children are targetted. In all, 3,340 booths with 456 fixed teams and 14,922 vaccine workers will carry out the programme in the city.

A parent, Arfa Fathima, who had taken her one year old child to Urdu School on Mosque Road said, "It took a few second to finish the process. It was well managed and we did not stand in long queues. After the vaccination, the little finger of my child was inked."

DON'T MISS POLIO DOSE: CM's ADVICE TO PARENTS

Says 64 lakh children below 5yrs will be administered vaccine

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

THE Covid-19 vaccination drive has been temporarily suspended for four days because all health workers have now been commissioned to participate in the polio drive.

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Sunday administered polio drops to three infants at his home office Krishna, where Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar was also present. He announced that 64 lakh children below the age of five would be administered polio drops. He urged parents to bring their children for the drops.

The government indicated that those with children under 5 years old, who had received drops earlier, need to participate in the drive again.

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa administers polio vaccine to a baby at his home office Krishna, in Bengaluru on Sunday

Dr Sudhakar also urged parents to get their children inoculated against polio. He said that even if children have been administered polio drops multiple times earlier, they should get vaccinated again until they are five years of age. "Mobile units have been set up. There has been no case of polio in India in the past 11 years, but neighbouring countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan are still not polio-free. So as a preventive measure, India is still conducting a polio vaccination drive," he added.

JAB FOR THE WARRIOR

Hesitation of any kind for a scientific product is a sign of mental weakness, specially for medical practitioners like us. I had no hesitation in taking the vaccine. Such a lot of research has gone into making the vaccine available, despite the race against time. I trust science and our scientists. Having been the nodal officer for Covid in BMCRI and related hospitals, I have seen the kind of horror that people went through because of the pandemic. The vaccine is a god send. Most of my core committee members took the vaccine along with me. There have been no side effects or any other issues. Vaccines are safe and effective, with the benefits outweighing the risk. I believe that by taking the vaccine, we can create a safer future for our loved ones

Dr Smitha Segu, Task Force Head and Nodal Officer for Covid-19 at Victoria Hospital

I had read about the vaccination and knew that Covishield had no side effects or symptoms. In our hospital, about 250 health workers have been vaccinated and nobody has had any side effects, apart from one person who had nausea and was fine after a few minutes. After I took the vaccine, I was normal and was even back to work. The only thing we have to avoid is alcoholic beverages for 45 days post vaccination, as it is known to affect the immune system. One should not miss taking the second dose of vaccine. It is very important as the immunity goes up only after the second or third week after the second dose. It is mandatory to take both shots

Dr Thomas Chandy, Director, Hosmat Hospital

'Efficacy of vaccine is high a week after second dose'

BALA CHAUHAN @Bengaluru

Israel, a country with a nine million population, is leading the world in its mass vaccination drive with more than 30% of its population having received the first dose and 14 per cent having had the second. *TNIE* speaks to **Dr Boaz Lev, head of Advisory Committee for the Corona Vaccines and Epidemic Control, State of Israel**, on what went behind the country's mass vaccination drive and whether data sharing was a part of the agreement for early procurement of the vaccines.

Israel, with more than 30% of its population having received the first dose of the Pfizer-BioNtech vaccine, has become an international test case for vaccination efficacy. What is the vaccine data so far?

It is still early to say definitively but it seems from the preliminary observations that the efficacy is high a week after the second injection. It is above 70 per cent and may be beyond 90 per cent. We start seeing reduction in severe cases among medical staff and elderly, who were vaccinated early on.

Wasn't it a huge risk to order the vaccine prior to its authorisation?

It was definitely a risk. But it was the right thing to do. Israel had ordered vaccines prior to their authorization in order to promise the supply at the earliest and deliver the vaccination as soon as the vaccine was authorized. We have engaged with other companies too in order to secure vaccines when authorisation comes. Concerning the prior agreement about data, I was not involved in the negotiations.

Would sharing of data not amount to infringement of personal data privacy?

There was no agreement of such exchange of sharing of personal data or medical records. Hence, there's no infringement. It is only statistical data that we wanted to share with the whole world and the vaccine maker regarding the results of this extensive vaccine campaign.

How effective has the vaccine been in controlling the spread of Covid-19?

It is difficult to judge the reduction in the spread of the infection. The presence of the various mutants and poor compliance of people to lockdown makes it difficult to assess. The vaccine seems effective towards the mutants but it is early to know to what extent. We don't see many re-infections. It is anyway early to predict the final results.

Is vaccination compulsory? How were you able to roll it out to nearly 3 million people?

It is not compulsory. The residents receive the vaccine by their provider-insurer. The community medicine has a strong infrastructure. The prioritization plans enabled orderly rollout going mainly by age and risk.

What are the lessons that Israel can share with the world?

One of the biggest lessons in our battle against the pandemic is the logistic preparedness. There is a need for a good, safe and simple prioritization plan. Recruit media, religious and opinion leaders to enhance compliance.

CHILDREN NEED TO EAT HEALTHY, PLAY MORE: DOCS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

DR Chandrika Bhat, Consultant-Pediatric Rheumatology, at Rainbow Children's Hospital, Marathahalli, said too much importance is being given to the immune system based on information accessed from the internet following the outbreak of the pandemic.

"There is evidence to suggest that excessive immunity can, on the contrary, be harmful. This means that a dysfunctional or an overdrive of the immune system can result in damage. For children, until the age of about five, the immune system is inexperienced. Giving excess immunity boosters will only harm the body. There is no scientific evidence that immunity boosters help in preventing infection. Also, an excessively strong immune system can start attacking our own body cells wherein vital organs can get damaged."

She, however, said children with autism usually resist fruits, which are required for vitamin intake. Hence, they can be prescribed some supplements. But not every child requires it. "The immune system of children attacking their own body can lead to symptoms such as prolonged fever, rashes, joint pain with swelling, muscle pain, redness of the eyes and lips, oral ulcers, weight loss or disturbances in growth. These should alert parents about the possibility of a rheumatological illness," said Dr Chandrika.

Dr Anuradha Vinod, Consultant-Paediatrics, Manipal Hospitals, Old Airport Road, said the pandemic saw a lot of people, including children, taking supplements. She said she had come across cases where children have developed severe mouth ulcers after consuming vitamin C supplements, whereas citrus fruits would have been enough.

"The main supplements taken by children were vitamins C and D, and zinc, as many children were indoors. Vitamin D supplementation for daily requirement is useful. But we recommend children to improve their diet with balanced nutrition. Improving intake of water, physical activity and adequate sleep are more beneficial than taking supplements which have their own side effects." she explained.

Dr Supraja Chandrasekar, Consultant–Pediatric Intensivist at Columbia Asia Referral Hospital, Yeshwanthpur, said vitamins are of two types: fat soluble and water-soluble. "The water-soluble ones are generally harmless, as it is excreted through urine. The problem lies with fat-soluble vitamins like Vitamin A, E, D, and K. When these are taken in excess, they can affect children. We suggest parents to avoid buying over-the-counter vitamin supplements."

"Children need to eat basic food right, play enough and connect with themselves, family and nature. This is the best natural immunity booster," Dr Supraja added.

BOOSTING CHILDREN'S IMMUNITY NATURALLY

- Healthy diet with fruits, nuts and vegetables
- Avoid processed foods
- Drink eight glasses of water a day
- Good physical activities, including yoga
- 8-10 hours of good sleep
- Stress-free home environment
- Exposure to good sunlight

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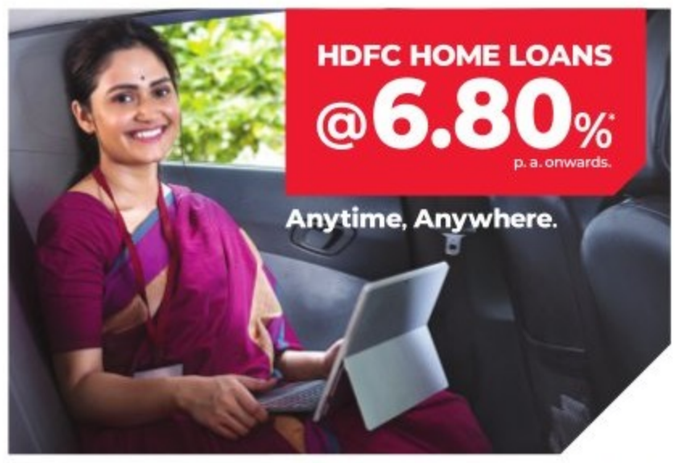
MISSING

The Photograph of **Grahori** Age 72/2020, Uriyarikkunnu Purayidam, Puthiyathura, Karumkulam, Thiruvanathapuram, Kerala. Mentioned above is missing from his house since 23.12.2020, 19.30 Hrs . A case in Crime 1795/2020, U/s 57 of KP Act was registered in Kanjiramkulam Police Station this regard.

If any information is received in this regard, Kindly inform to any of the following officials.

Kanjiramkulam Police Station -0471 2261100
Inspector of Police, Kanjiramkulam
Police Station -9497947117

249/F2/2021/I&PRD



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इण्डियन ओवरसीज़ बैंक
INDIAN OVERSEAS BANK

Balance Sheet Management Department, Central Office:
763, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002

Indian Overseas bank (IOB) invites for the following: RFP Reference Number: BSMD/TDS/RFP/01/2020-2021

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR APPOINTMENT OF TDS CONSULTANTS FOR PROVIDING END TO END SOLUTION AND SERVICES FOR FILING OF TDS (TAX DEDUCTED AT SOURCE) RETURNS FOR FY 2021-22 TO FY 2023-24

The RFP document for the above is available in bank's website **www.iob.in/ https://iobtenders.auctiontiger.net** For RFP details and future amendments, if any, keep referring to the above websites.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Lost of Share Certificate No. 605 & 606 and Security Deposit Receipts Nos.1314 & 1315 for equity Shares of CENTURY GALAXY DEVELOPERS LIMITED for 3646 Shares in the name of Mrs. A Shantha Rao. Any person who has a claim in respect of the said shares should lodge such claim with the Company at its Registered Office at B Tower, 9th Floor, Corporate Block, Diamond District, Kodihally, Bangalore - 560008 within 15 days from the date of this advertisement; else the Company will proceed to issue Duplicate Share Certificate.

For Century Galaxy Developers Ltd.,
Sd/- **Secretary**

Date : 29-01-2021
Place : Bangalore

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I BENGALURU
No. 4, 2nd Floor, LIC Jeevan Mangal Building Residency Road, Bengaluru- 560025
RC No. 12503

IDBI Bank Limited, No. 326, Ashwini Complex, 1st & 2nd Floor, 6th Main, 80 Feet Road, Indiranagar, Bengaluru-560038.
.....Certificate Holder
Versus
Mr. Bhaktha Vatsala Rajanna Danda .....Certified Debtors

DEMAND NOTICE

To,
Mr. Bhaktha Vatsala Rajanna Danda, No.93/5, Pavamana, 1st Main, 4th cross, 3rd Phase, BSK 3rd Stage, Ittamadu Exten., Nagarbhavi, Bengaluru - 560 085.
Also at:
Mr. Bhaktha Vatsala Rajanna Danda, Pavamana Enterprises, No.93/5, 1st Main, 4th Cross, 3rd Phase, BSK 3rd Stage, Bengaluru - 560 085.

In view of the Recovery Certificate issued in **O.A. No. 524/2012** passed by the Presiding Officer, DRT-1, Bengaluru on **25.09.2017** an amount of **Rs.13,79,874/-** (Rupees Thirteen Lakhs Seventy Nine Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventy Four Only) is due against you along with interest and costs from the date of O.A.s till realization.
You are hereby called upon to deposit the above sum within 15 days of the receipt of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made as per rules.
In addition to the sum aforesaid you will be liable to pay:
a) Such interest as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the execution proceedings.
b) all cost, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and other process that may be taken for recovering the amount due.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal on this 24th Day of December 2020.

Sd/- (RAJASEKHARAN.R)
RECOVERY OFFICER-1
DRT - I, BENGALURU

Note : Attention is invited to Rule 16 of the Second Schedule of the Income Tax Act 1961 read with recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 which is reproduced below:
"Rule 16(1) where a notice has been served on a defaulter under Rule 2, the defaulter or his representative in interest shall not be competent to mortgage, charge, lease or otherwise deal with any property belonging to him except with the permission of the Debts Recovery Officer, nor shall any civil court issue any process against such property in execution of a decree for the payment of money.
(2) Where an attachment has been made under this schedule any private transfer or delivery of the property attached or of any interest therein and any payment to the defaulter of any debt, dividend or other monies contrary to such attachment, shall be void, as against all claims enforceable under the attachment."

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Bengaluru Zone, Administration & Services Department
No.11, Bank of India Building, K.G Road, Bengaluru-560 009,
Phone No.080-2295 9419 /417,
E mail : Bengaluru.AandS@bankofindia.co.in

PREMISES REQUIREMENT FOR OPENING OF NEW BRANCH ON SARJAPURA MAIN ROAD ON LONG TERM LEASE / RENT

Bank of India proposes to open a new branch in Bengaluru City on Sarjapura Main Road in between the stretch of 2.50 kms from **Columbia Asia Hospital** to **Wipro Gate/Junnasandra Gate,** with carpet area of 2000-2500 sq.ft. The Bank requires suitable premises on long term lease / rent. For details interested parties may logon to our website- www.bankofindia.co.in (Tender Page). The last date for submission of offers is **22.02.2021.**

30.01.2021 DY.ZONAL MANAGER

बैंक ऑफ इंडिया Bank of India BOI
Bengaluru Zone, Administration & Services Department
No.11, Bank of India Building, K.G Road, Bengaluru-560 009,
Phone No.080-2295 9419/456, E mail : Bengaluru.AandS@bankofindia.co.in

EMPANELMENT OF VENDORS FOR SUPPLY / SERVICE AND INSTALLATION OF AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS

Detailed notification inviting applications for empanelment of Vendors for Supply / service and installation of Air Conditioning systems is available in Bank's website www.bankofindia.co.in. Last Date of receipt of sealed tenders / application is **10.02.2021** up to 4.00 PM. Any corrigendum in the subject matter will be published in the same website only.

30.1.2021 **DEPUTY ZONAL MANAGER BENGALURU ZONE**

MK/P. ADVT/20-21/05 30-01-2021
Offers are invited from reputed, reliable and capable contractor / firms for the following works / supplies against the Tender numbers and description mentioned below:

आईआरईएल/कन्याकुमारी/2021/ईटी104 IREL/Kanyakumari/2021/ ET104.	एमके प्लांट परिसर में मौजूदा मकान की छत की मरम्मत और रखरखाव। Repair and Maintenance of existing building roof at MK Plant Premises
आईआरईएल/कन्याकुमारी/2021/ईटी106 IREL/Kanyakumari/2021/ ET106	एमएसपी में सिफ्ट संचालन के दौरान परिचालन और रखरखाव कार्यों में सहायता के लिए अर्ध-कुशल व्यक्तियों को प्रदान करने के लिए एक एजेंसी को कार्य में लगाना। Engaging an agency for providing semi-skilled persons for assisting in the operational and breakdown maintenance works during shift operations in MSP

For further details visit www.mstcecommerce.com/eprochome/irel, www.irel.co.in, and CPP website. Corrigendum / Extension if any will be hosted in the above websites only.
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ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ, ಬಂದರು ಮತ್ತು ಒಳನಾಡು ಜಲಸಾರಿಗೆ ಇಲಾಖೆ,
ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು ವಿಭಾಗ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಮುಂದೂಡಿಕೆ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : 01/2020-21/ ದಿನಾಂಕ:30-01-2021

ಉಲ್ಲೇಖ: ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 45/2020-21/ ದಿನಾಂಕ:13-01-2021

ಮೇಲ್ಕಂಡ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು ಹಾಗೂ ಕಡೂರು ಉಪವಿಭಾಗಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಪಡುವ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ (**Standard Tender Document - KW 3 & 4 ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗನುಸಾರ**) ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಇ-ಪ್ರೋಕ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಕಾರಣಗಳಿಂದಾಗಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸ್ವೀಕೃತಿ ದಿನಾಂಕವನ್ನು ಮುಂದೂಡಿಕೆ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 120.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು ಆಗಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಉಳಿದಂತೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

1) ಕ್ರಮ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 11 ಹಾಗೂ 14ರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ದಿನಾಂಕ: 12-02-2021 ರಂದು ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಗಂಟೆಯೊಳಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬೇಕು.

ಈ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳಂದು ಆಕಸ್ಮಿಕ ರಜಾ ದಿನಗಳು ಬಂದಲ್ಲಿ ಮರು ದಿನವನ್ನು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಷಯ ನಿರ್ವಾಹಕರನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಿ ತಿಳಿಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯನ್ನು **www.kpwd.gov.in.pwd website** ನಲ್ಲಿ ಓದಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/- ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ಲೋ.ಬಂ.ಮತ್ತು ಒ.ಜ.ಸಾ. ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು ವಿಭಾಗ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು

Prime Minister Narendra Modi should intervene and resolve the Mahadayi water dispute. The BJP is ruling in Goa and as well as in Karnataka. Thus, Prime Minister Modi should take the lead and resolve the dispute permanently by holding talks with the chief ministers of both the states — Satish Jarkiholi, KPCC working president

STRAWS IN THE WIND

Comedy of errors over common name

What's in a name, you may ask? Especially one as common as Mahesh? Kollegal MLA N Mahesh has the answer. There may be a Mahesh in almost every household in the Old Mysuru region, but I have never faced a problem all these years, said Mahesh. Until he called Mysuru DC Rohini Sindhuri to talk about the issue of drinking water, and the DC did not respond. "I later sent her a text message, saying that I was Kollegal MLA N Mahesh and not KR Nagar MLA Sa Ra Mahesh. I got a call from her," said Mahesh at the KDP meeting in Chamarajanagar. Reference point: The ongoing cold war between Sa Ra Mahesh and Rohini Sindhuri.

Youth Cong chief please stand up...

The Karnataka Youth Congress elections were an online affair because of Covid, spread over three long days. Voters were divided into three zones and each zone was allowed to vote on designated days. Now, 18 days after the laborious election process, no one knows who the Youth Congress president is. The joke goes that even results of state assembly elections and national elections are declared in a day, so why this mystery over an internal party election? Supporters of the three main aspirants -- Mohammed Nalapad, Raksha Ramaiah and H S Manjunath -- have not stopped making calls but have only drawn a blank...

When ambitions are thwarted

Of late, Hubballi-Dharwad West MLA Aravind Bellad has been coming down like a ton of bricks on the BRTS corridor, connecting Hubballi and Dharwad, and has even spoken of scrapping the project. His comments have evoked sharp surprise on two counts: first, the project is the brainchild of ex-CM Jagadish Shettar, and second, Bellad had kept mum when the project started. But as they say, it's in the chronology. Bellad is disappointed over not getting a cabinet berth and wants to embarrass party leaders. He has started pressure tactics in case Shettar is dropped from the cabinet as his name is already doing the rounds for the Belagavi LS bypoll. Bellad's remarks have only given ammunition to the Opposition and the public, already critical of the BRTS service.

I worked like clerk during coalition: HDK

'Atmanirbhar Bharat visualised by me, PM has copied my programme; State Govt hasn't started any new project'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru/ Bagalkot

LASHING out at his former coalition partner, the Congress, yet again, JDS leader H D Kumaraswamy on Sunday lamented that "as Chief Minister, I worked like a first-division clerk in the 14-month-long government".

"I did not have any freedom, despite being at the helm during the coalition. I faced pressure from all corners. Congress Legislative Party leader Siddaramaiah and his colleagues coerced me to continue with programmes and irrigation projects that were announced during their regime. I had no liberty to take any decisions," he said at a one-day convention of the party held at Bagalkot, where the JDS is seeking to strengthen its presence before the upcoming taluk and zilla panchayat elections.

Kumaraswamy is seeking to revive the fortunes of the party, which ruled the state in 1994 and won 16 parliamentary seats in 1996, by focusing on North Karnataka. The party also aims to win nearly 30 Assembly seats where it lost by small margins of less than 2,000 votes.

Former chief minister H D Kumaraswamy and other JDS leaders attend a one-day convention of the party at Bagalkot on Sunday | EXPRESS

On farmer protests in Delhi, he said, "The violence reported on the Republic Day is a black mark in the history of the country. The government should investigate and find out the motive behind the violence. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his concern over farm protests during his address in Mann Ki Baat, but did not talk about the violence. Enough discussions should be held on farm laws before they are implemented."

Taking a dig at Modi's ambitious of Atmanirbhar Bharat, he claimed, "When I was in power, I had started a programme named 'Compete with China' in nine different clusters to give a boost to the industrial sector, mainly for 'Make in India', in the state. Now, PM Modi has copied my programme and renamed it Atmanirbhar Bharat. I was disheartened when the government did not invite me for the ground-breaking ceremony of the toy cluster in Koppal. It was I who announced the project and gave it incentives."

Continuing his criticism of Siddaramaiah, who got elected from the Badami Assembly constituency which is part of Bagalkot, he said, "The development works taken up by the BJP government across the state were announced during my regime. They have not announced any new schemes or projects since they have come to power. I had also sanctioned projects worth Rs 1,200 crore for the development of Badami alone because of the promise I made during the 2018 Assembly election campaign."

MLA Bandeppa Kashempur, MLC Basavaraj Horatti and over 5,000 party workers from across the state participated in the party convention.

> **I did not have any freedom, despite being at the helm during the coalition. I faced pressure from all corners. Siddaramaiah and his colleagues coerced me to continue with programmes and irrigation projects that were announced during their regime. I had no freedom**
>
> HD Kumaraswamy, former CM

EXPRESS READ

Give 2A quota to Panchamasalis: Seer

DAVANGERE/CHITRADURGA: Panchamasali seer Basava Jayamruthyunjaya on Sunday asked the MLAs belonging to the community to pressurise the CM to get them 2A reservation under the State list along with the OBC tag under the Central list. The seer, who has been leading a padayatra from Kudalasangama seeking the 2A reservation tag, said that they were nearing Bengaluru, and would intensify the stir. Addressing a public gathering at Bharamasagara in Chitradurga district, he said that the aim was to provide social justice for the community and they were committed in getting the OBC status in order to bring socio-economic equality.

AS PROTEST GOES ON...

SIDDU MEETS STRIKING TOYOTA UNIT WORKERS

Ex-CM hits out at PM for poor fiscal management

Siddaramaiah meets striking workers at the Toyota Kirloskar Motors manufacturing unit at Bidadi near Bengaluru on Sunday

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

OPPOSITION leader in the Assembly Siddaramaiah on Sunday visited the Toyota Kirloskar Motors manufacturing unit at Bidadi to meet protesting workers.

Siddaramaiah was given a rousing welcome by the staff and their family members, who have been protesting for more than 80 days against the company management over increased work hours and alleged inhuman work conditions. He sat with the protesters, listened to their woes and dialled Labour Minister Shivaram Hebbar from the spot to request the government's immediate intervention to solve the issue.

"It is our State that has given land, water and electricity to Japan's Toyota to start their manufacturing facility. It is wrong to impose Japan's labour laws on employees here. We don't have any objection to a foreign company investing here. But it has to follow the laws of our land and treat its employees fairly," he said after speaking to the protesters. Workers have alleged mistreatment and violation of labour laws at the manufacturing unit.

> **It is our State that has given land, water and electricity to Japan's Toyota to start their manufacturing facility. It is wrong to impose Japan's labour laws on employees here**
>
> Siddaramaiah, former CM

"It has been three months since the protest began. The State Government should have resolved it by now. When the labour minister could not solve it, at least the Chief Minister should have called for a meeting. Ramanagara district in-charge minister Dr CN Ashwath Narayan mediated a meeting between the company and its employees. He said the problem was solved after just 20 minutes of meeting. Then why are employees still protesting," Siddaramaiah asked. He assured the protesting employees that he will take up the issue during the ongoing Assembly session.

There is no hope in the Union Budget, which will be presented on Monday, as the GDP that was 9 per cent during the UPA government has reduced to 4.2 per cent now, increasing employment from 2 per cent to 9.2 per cent in urban areas and to 8.9 per cent in rural areas under the BJP rule, he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced that farm laws will be kept on hold for 18 months, while not accepting farmers' demands even after 11 rounds of talks. There is a political reason behind this as Assembly polls are due in five states and also the government has assured Adani and Ambani that farm laws will be implemented, he alleged.

'No alliance with JDS in MCC'

Siddaramaiah said that Congress will not have any alliance with the JDS to come to power in the Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) Council. On JDS supporting amendment to Land Reforms Act in Karnataka and opposing Centre's farm bills, Siddaramaiah said that he does not want to comment as JDS is not a political party at all.

e-buses likely on inter-dist routes: Savadi

PRAKASH SAMAGA @Udupi

TRANSPORT Minister Laxman Savadi on Sunday said that the government may introduce electric buses (e-buses) on inter-district routes, depending on the success of 300 such buses to ply in Bengaluru by February-end.

The Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation is taking 300 e-buses on lease under the Centre's Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles in India scheme.

"With fuel prices increasing, we should not be overdependent on non-renewable sources like petrol and diesel. We should use more electric vehicles to get benefits like road tax exemption. The Centre has been encouraging sugar factories across the country to produce ethanol which can be blended with petrol and diesel," the Deputy CM said.

The e-buses to be introduced in Bengaluru can run for 200-250 km on a single charge, Savadi told TNIE. "Battery charging points will come up at fuel stations," he added. Savadi said that though one e-bus is estimated to cost Rs 2 crore, the Centre is providing a subsidy of Rs 55 lakh per bus and the State Government will avail Rs 33.33 lakh subsidy per bus.

No-trust motion: Shetty may quit to avoid ending tenure with row

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

COUNCIL Chairman **Prathap Chandra Shetty** might tender his resignation to save himself the embarrassment of facing another no-confidence motion, with the mandatory 14-day period expiring on Monday, sources in the Council said.

Once the no-confidence motion is taken up in the House, it may not be a pretty scene, with the BJP taking on Shetty. The chairman, who began his career as a legislator in the late 1970s, has over 40 years of experience and may not like to be ousted from his position. He has reportedly indicated to close aides that he may resign in the next couple of days, considering it is now out in the open that BJP has the support of JDS, and the two parties had voted together to elect the deputy chairman. Political circles are abuzz with talk of fresh commotion in the Upper House, with BJP's no-confidence notice period ending on February 1. Congress, which enjoyed a majority until the JDS switched sides, has 29 seats, against BJP with 31 seats and JDS with 13.

Shetty was elected with JDS support, and former deputy chairman Dharme Gowda (JDS) was also elected on the combined Congress-JDS strength. There is talk that BJP will seek to wrest control of the Upper House a third time, having made two unsuccessful attempts to unseat him with no-confidence notices. With BJP preparing to launch another assault on Shetty, it remains to be seen how Congress counters the collective might of BJP and JDS.

Political analysts say Shetty had averted a clash a few days earlier, when the contentious House panel headed by JDS MLC Marithibbe Gowda had tabled its report. Shetty did not allow a discussion on the subject, sidestepping any confrontation, which could be indicative of his mood on the no-trust move.

KSFC celebrates diamond jubilee

Chief Minister Yediyurappa releases the diamond jubilee souvenir and launches the official website of the Karnataka State Financial Corporation in Bengaluru on Sunday. KSFC was set up to cater to the long-term and short-term financial needs of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises in the state

Yatra for ST tag: Leaders fall over each other to greet Kuruba seers

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @Tumakuru

A decade ago, when Siddaramaiah led a 320 km padayatra from Bengaluru to Ballari against illegal mining by Reddy brothers, he emerged as the undisputed Kuruba leader as members of the community, including religious heads, thronged the yatra and wished him to be the CM. Both Siddaramaiah's and his community's mission was accomplished as he became the CM between 2013 and 2018.

Now, religious heads — Sri Niranjanananandapuri and Eshwaranandapuri — have become the rallying point for the community as they have set off on a 340-km walkathon from Kaginele that was kicked off on January 15. The movement this time is to get the ST tag for the community. As the yatra, which reportedly has the backing of RDPR Minister K S Eshwarappa, reached Tumakuru, leaders from all parties have started extending support. As soon as the seers reached Sira, former minister T B Jayachandra treated them at his home. Following suit were former DyCM Dr G Parameshwara and Congress leader K N Rajanna. Former MLA S Shafi Ahmed in Tumakuru threw open the campus of his HMSIT Engineering College on Sunday to the Swamis. JD(S) MLA D C Gowrishankar and city BJP MLA G B Jyothiganesh too called on the Swamis.

Sri Niranjanananandapuri and Eshwaranandapuri during the rally

"I support the padayatra. But as per the Supreme Court's verdict, the reservation should not exceed 50 per cent. An amendment to the Constitution is required," Jayachandra said. Community leader H M Revanna said, "It's an apolitical rally and when it concludes at BIEC on February 7, former CM Siddaramaiah too will take part," he clarified.

It was Eshwarappa who laid the foundation for the rally. Now political observers ask whether Eshwarappa is eyeing the chief minister's chair.

'ENSURE WELFARE'

Check on outsourced staff, Labour Dept told

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE Lokayukta has directed the Labour Department to conduct a random check of payments made to outsourced employees, both in government and private establishments, to check whether they are complying with the provisions of the Minimum Wages Act and Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act.

"The officers of the Labour Department should ensure payment of wages and also in respect of deposit of the prescribed amount in relation to ESI and PF. If not, the officers should inform the authorities to initiate legal action against erring agencies and employers and to take steps for cancelling the licence and blacklist such agencies," Lokayukta Justice P Vishwanatha Shetty said in the order passed recently.

He warned that any laxity on the part of the Labour Department officers is required to be viewed seriously and appropriate action should be taken against them. It is the duty of the Commissioner and Joint Commissioners of the department to ensure that officers discharge their statutory duties, without giving any scope for mis-management or mal-administration, he said.

He directed the ADGP, Karnataka Lokayukta, to instruct all Lokayukta SPs and DySPs to get an investigation done in respect of the various issues, such as the number of agencies which have been providing manpower to government departments, number of criminal cases filed against them for not complying with rules, amount required to be recovered towards minimum wages and steps taken to recover the amount.

After the probe, the officers should submit a report to the Lokayukta listing out the details of public servants, including officials of the Labour department, who were deliberately lax in implementing labour laws, he said.

"I am sure the Principal Secretary of Labour Department will examine the matter and, if necessary, constitute a panel with the assistance of experts of the labour department and take appropriate decision preferably within eight weeks," he said.

Fill vacancies

During the hearing of a labour case, it was brought the notice of Lokayukta that the sanctioned strength of the labour department staff is too meagre and even out of that, more than 50 per cent posts are vacant. Shetty said that the authorities are required to create the posts, keeping in view the volume of work involved in the department, and also fill up the vacant posts to make the department effective and functional.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
KARNATAKA/SOUTH

A 55-year-old Anganwadi worker from Mancherial district in Telangana who was immunised with the Covid-19 vaccine on January 19, died while undergoing treatment for some health complications at NIMS hospital in Hyderabad on Saturday night

Activists protest outside TRS MLA Challa Dharma Reddy's house on Sunday | EXPRESS

BJP cadre damage TRS MLA's house

Protesters incensed by his comments on collection of donations for Ram Temple

EXPRESS NEW SERVICE @ Warangal

TENSION escalated when BJP activists threw chairs and stones at the residence of Parkal TRS legislator Challa Dharma Reddy here on Sunday, incensed over his comments that the saffron party was trying to further its political interests using the name of Lord Rama.

In retaliation, a group of the MLA's followers targeted the BJP Urban Party Office in Hanamkonda. Raising slogans of 'Jai Challa Dharma Reddy', the TRS workers, who came on two-wheelers, smashed the window panes of the BJP office. Demanding action against BJP urban district president Rao Padma for leading the attack on Dharma Reddy's residence, they later staged a protest in front of the Subedari police station.

Trouble began as soon as Dharma Reddy made the comments against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The saffron party workers quickly gathered at his residence and started to raise slogans against him, even as a few others pelted stones and hurled chairs at the building, smashing several window panes. At the time of the attack, Dharma Reddy was out attending a programme in the city. Police rushed to the spot and overpowered the activists. Even as they grappled with the party workers, the latter kept throwing throwing stones at the building.

The BJP workers turned furious when Dharma Reddy said he was against the collection of donations for the construction of the Ram Mandir at Ayodhya. He alleged that the BJP was dragging Lord Rama into politics which was nothing but an act of desecration.

I am a staunch devotee of Rama. I have built temples for Lord Rama in my hometown. A few people are collecting funds using fake receipt books in the name of Ayodhya and I want to know where the funds are going

Dharma Reddy, TRS leader

TRS PREZ CONDEMNS ATTACK

TRS working president KT Rama Rao called upon the TRS cadres to confront BJP workers for engaging in hate politics. "There is no place for physical attacks in democracy," he said.

K'taka seeks infra push from Centre

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"THE topmost priority and share of resources must be allocated to education and implementation of the National Education Policy," said Deputy Chief Minister Dr C N Ashwath Narayan, while highlighting the need for better infrastructure for the manufacturing sector too.

In its request to the Finance Minister, the Karnataka Government had sought additional funds for the development of Bengaluru with respect to big-ticket projects like suburban railway, Metro rail, etc. The state had also sought release of special grants to the tune of Rs 5,495 crore, as recommended by the 15th Finance Commission in its report for 2020-21.

Given the fund allocation in the previous budget and the economic slowdown, the opposition in Karnataka is for having "realistic" expectations. "The Economic Survey has projected 11 per cent growth rate, but that is after the 7.7 per cent contraction we saw. There have been huge cuts in central funds, in GST compensation, SDRF and NDRF allocation, Centre's share in sponsored projects. We have very little expectation from the Budget. We hope it will at least be a survival budget if not a revival one," said former minister and Chittapur Congress MLA Priyank Kharge.

'Sasikala's return will have impact on Tamil Nadu politics'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A huge posse of policemen was also deployed for security. Though the police tried to prevent people from coming close, many of her staunch followers showered flower petals on the vehicle.

As the convoy moved through the crowd of supporters, movement of other vehicles was brought to a halt for about 10 minutes. From KR Market Junction, the vehicles speeded up and Sasikala headed to Prestige Golfshire resort near Nandi Hills.

Karnataka State General Secretary of Amma Makkal Munnettra Kazagam (AMMK), M P Sampath, said that the release of their leader had already created fear in the minds of her political rivals. "Many ministers and MLAs (of Tamil Nadu) are ready to meet her as soon as she returns to Tamil Nadu. Her return will definitely have an impact on Tamil Nadu politics," he insisted.

Expelled AIADMK leader V K Sasikala leaves in a car that carries the flag of AIADMK, in Bengaluru on Sunday | SHRIRAM BN

Selvaraj, who had come from Krishnagiri, said he was very happy to see his leader. "I am happy that she has completed her jail term and is returning to Tamil Nadu. Those who had expelled her from the party, of which she was General Secretary, have already started shivering," he remarked.

Sasikala, who had served a four-year jail term in a disproportionate assets case, was hospitalised on January 21 after testing positive for Covid-19. Her jail term ended on January 27 and the release formalities were completed the same day at the hospital. She was declared "asymptomatic for last 10 days and fit for discharge with advice for quarantine" by the Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute, on Saturday.

CREIME PATROL

City bizman found murdered in AP

Bengaluru: A businessman, who had gone missing, was found murdered in Andhra Pradesh. The Amruthahalli police, who detained a suspect have left for Tirupati to exhume the body, which was found buried in a wooded patch. The deceased, Siddarth Singh (28) was a resident of Hebbal and a relative of former Karnataka CM late N Dharam Singh. Police said that Siddarth's father had filed a missing complaint on January 25. Siddarth, who lived alone in an apartment, had texted him at 5 am on January 19, saying he was leaving for the US. But his phone was switched off. "Based on technical evidence, the suspect was picked up," the police said.

Harassed for dowry, woman ends life

Bengaluru: A homemaker was found hanging at her house in Varthur police station limits on Saturday. Usha (26) was married to Ranjith, a private company employee, five years ago. Police said that Usha was found hanging from the ceiling fan in her room on Saturday evening. Her husband, who found her dead, informed her family. "Usha's father has filed a complaint alleging that Ranjith was harassing her to bring more dowry. She was also sent to her parents' house on several occasions by her husband. She has taken the extreme step due to harassment. We have registered a case against Ranjith, who is detained for inquiry," the police added.

₹30K-CR SCAM

Activist alleges threat to life, cops start probe

BANSY KALAPPA @Bengaluru

Bengaluru police are investigating a "threat to life" to Anil Kumar G R, an RTI activist seeking to expose a ₹30,000-crore scam.

Kumar, chief of NaMo Samaj South India, who unearthed the scam in the Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Limited (KREDL) and BBMP, took it up legally in court and also sought details through RTI. On January 5, Kumar went to the BBMP and KREDL offices and filed the RTI applications, seeking information on a multi-crore scam which he alleged was carried out suspectedly in cahoots with other agencies, had ramifications across the state and claimed that many politicians were involved.

After he met engineers and officers, he was asked to return on January 16 for the information. But he smelt a rat and refused to go, and instead, went on January 22. As soon after he left the government office, a gang of about 25 rowdies went to the same office and sought information about Anil Kumar. Police suspect the goons were tipped off by someone inside the office.

When the gang missed him, they went to the organisation NaMo Samaj, asking for his address and other details, and threatened his associates. In his complaint to police and higher-ups in the government, he said how he had exposed and even stalled a land grab case in Girinagar by filing a PIL in the High Court. The land was restored to the government. Kumar also exposed attempts of the mafia to grab government Civic Amenities land and parks, and helped restore it to the government.

4 die as car collides with concrete mixer

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

FOUR people were killed in a road accident, after their car rammed into a concrete mixer in Chikkajala traffic police station limits late on Saturday night.

The deceased have been P Shivashankar (26) and Milan Raj (19) — both residents of Bagalur; Madhusudhan (26), a resident of Sathanur; and M Anusha (22) of Vidyaranyapura. The four were relatives. While the three men were into real estate business, Anusha was a graduate.

Police said the three visited Madhusudhan's house for dinner on Saturday. Later, the three men decided to drop Anusha home in Madhusudhan's car. They headed towards Bellalli from Kannur. At around 12.30 am, the car rammed into the lorry at the rear, which killed the three men on the spot, while Anusha succumbed to her injuries in hospital on Sunday morning.

"Preliminary investigation showed that rash and negligent driving by the car driver led to the accident. The collision was such that both vehicles were stuck to each other, and it took more than two hours to separate them," the police said. The lorry driver abandoned his vehicle after the incident, and is since absconding. Efforts are on to trace him. Senior police officers, including Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) BR Ravikanthegowda, DCP (Traffic - North) Sajeeth VJ, and others, visited the spot.

Hyderabad hospital first in Asia to use disposable duodenoscope

DONITA JOSE @Hyderabad

AIG Hospitals in Hyderabad has become the first hospital in Asia to use a disposable duodenoscope. The equipment was used to operate on a 93-year-old immunocompromised patient, who was suffering from bile infection caused by stones.

The infection had begun spreading into the patient's blood, causing septicemia. The benefit of using the disposable duodenoscope over multiple-use duodenoscope is that the doctors could create a 100 per cent sterile setup to perform the surgery.

This was essential, as the nonagenarian man stood a high risk of contracting hospital-acquired infections, due to his health condition and age. Dr D Nageshwar Reddy, chairman and chief of gastroenterology, AIG Hospitals, said, "This is the start of a new era in therapeutic endoscopy, where disposable duodenoscope can be used to cut the infection rate dramatically. As is known, hospital-acquired infection is very common and a leading cause of mortality worldwide. There is 1-5 per cent chance of acquiring these infections, and it proves fatal in almost all cases. Multiple-use duedenoscopes are especially risky because they cannot be sterilised 100 per cent even with best practices. Disposable apparatus are a boon for vulnerable patients."

The disposable duodenoscope costs ₹2 lakh. While a multiple-use duodenoscope costs ₹50-60 lakh, it is used over 5,000 times across cases, making it a less sterile alternative.

EXPRESS READ

Lecturer transfers: Only 15% can move

Bengaluru: Only 15 per cent of teachers will be eligible for transfer each year, Deputy Chief Minister and Higher Education Minister C N Ashwath Narayan announced on Sunday. Degree and technical college lecturers, who have worked in the same place for four years, are eligible for transfer, he added. **ENS**

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - I / BENGALURU
Jeevan Mangal Buildings (2nd Floor), No.4, Residency Road, Bengaluru - 560 025

RECOVERY CERTIFICATE NO.11272
ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO.2333/2014
In the matter of:
Dena Bank (Now Bank of Baroda)
KG Road Branch. represented by ZOSAR Branch. Bengaluru
Versus
M/s. Vaishnavi Sales Corporation & OTHERS
CORRIGENDUM

To, 1. M/s. Vaishnavi Sales Corporation
A partnership Firm, Office at Flat No. S-4, Second Floor, No. 304/226/53/3 & 4, Sri Sai Sannidhi, Bilekahalli, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru- 560068 Represented by its partners Sri. M.Sudhakar Rao & Smt. Jyothsna Kulkarni **2. Sri. M. Sudhakar Rao, Partner M/s. Vaishnavi Sales Corporation,** Flat No. S-4, Second Floor, No. 304/226/3/3&4, Sri Sai Sannidhi, Bilekahalli, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru - 560068 **3. Smt. Jyothsna Kulkarni, Partner M/s. Vaishnavi Sales Corporation,** Flat No. S-4, Second Floor, No. 304/226/53/3 & 4, Sri Sai Sanniddhi, Bilekahalli, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru - 560068
-Defendants/Certified Debtors

You are directed to refer the Sale Proclamation issued by this Tribunal on 16.01.2021. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) by the proposed bidder is of Rs. 43,60,00.00 **may be read as Rs. 43,60,000.00 (Rupees Forty Three Lakhs and Sixty Thousand Only).** Other contents remain unaltered / unchanged.
Given Under may hand and seal of this **28th Day of January 2021.**

(Deepalndu Vani S.)
RECOVERY OFFICER- II,
DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL- I, BENGALURU

CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE
CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **V. RAJASHEKAR @ RAJASHEKHAR V @ VENKATARAMAN RAJASHEKAR @ RAJASEKAR V @ VENKATARAMAN RAJASEKAR** S/o T. Venkataraman Reddy, R/at No.2256, 15th Cross, 22-B-Main Road, Sector 01, HSR Layout, Bangalore 102, have changed my name, for Family & Personal Reasons, to **RAJASHEKAR TV.** By an affidavit sworn to before Notary **Dr BKR Krishnamurthy LLB, Ph.D,** on 28.01.2021, From Today.
I Shall be known, for all purposes and records, by my new name of **RAJASHEKAR TV** only hence forth.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **KIRAN .R,** S/o Ramu, Aged about 18 years, R/at Chikkakalya Village, Baginagere Post, Thippasandra Hobli, Magadi Taluk, Ramanagara District, now at Bengaluru, have changed my name from **KIRAN .R** to **ANANDA .R** vide affidavit dated 27.1.2021 sworn before Advocate & Notary Chandrashekaraiah S., Bangalore

ANNOUNCEMENT
I, CATHERINE GEETHA JOHN, Daughter of Sri T.A. John, residing at No.1, Mess, Champion, Kolar Gold Fields- 563117 state that I am a member of Our Lady of Victories Church, Champion, KGF. In all my school records my name is entered as **CATHERINE GEETHA JOHN,** but in Church record by inadvertence it has mentioned as **CATHERINA GITA.** Now this affidavit made to change my name as **CATHERINE GEETHA JOHN** in church record hence affidavit made before notoray N.Srinivasa.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Kiran Kumar S. resident of No.1485, 27th Cross, 24th Main Road, Banashankari 2nd Stage, Bangalore 560 070, have changed my name to **KIRAN AJAYA. S** vide affidavit dated 29th January 2021 in front of Mr. Hegde Ganapati Venkatraman, Notary.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **MANOJ .R,** S/o Ramu, Aged about 21 years, R/at Chikkakalya Village, Baginagere Post, Thippasandra Hobli, Magadi Taluk, Ramanagara District, now at Bengaluru, have changed my name from **MANOJ .R** to **PAVAN .R** vide affidavit dated 27.1.2021 sworn before Advocate & Notary Chandrashekaraiah S., Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **VIDYA K H** D/o Hemanth K H, resident of No. 48, 5th Cross, Siddeshwara Layout, Sidedahalli, Bengalore-560073, have changed my name from **K H LATHA SHREE** to **VIDYA K H** vide affidavit dated 29.01.2021 sworn before notary Kodi Nagappaya Bengaluru-73.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SATYA PRAKASH PURIGALI NARASIMHA MURTHY,** S/o Narasimha Murthy V, R/o 19, Guru Sukrutha, JP Nagar 7th Phase, Near Prasanna Jyothi Ashram, Puttenahalli, B'lore - 560078, have changed my name as **SATHYA PRAKASH PURIGALI NARASIMHA MURTHY,** vide affidavit dated 30/01/2021 sworn before notary D.S.Chandrakanth, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Apoorv Thapliyal S/o. Arun Thapliyal, R/at I-103, Springfield Apartment, Sarjapura Road, Bangalore-560102 have changed my Name from APOORVA THAPLIYAL to APOORV THAPLIYAL in passport Number J8436123 vide Affidavit dated 30.01.2021, sworn to before Notary R.S. Vijay, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, A. S ROOPA, Residing at 14-306, 3rd Floor, 14th Block, Shriram Sameeksha, Naidu Layout, Kuvempunagar, Jalahalli East, Bengaluru - 560013, has changed my name from **ROOPA SHANKAR A S** to **A S ROOPA** vide affidavit dated 31/01/2021, sworn before notary C. Srinivas, Bangalore.

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PUBLIC NOTICE
It is informed to the public that my client Mr. **PRASAD NAVNEETH,** S/o Sri. Ravindra Prasad, Aged about 23 years, presently residing at #306, Thanisandra, Dr. Shivarama Karanth Nagar Post, Bangalore-560 077,
Has lost **X std (Reg. No. 4155255), XII Std Marks card (Reg No. 4628461)** and **Migration certificates issued by CBSE Board, & Original PDC (Reg No.15C01A318)** issued from Kristu Jayanti College. while shifting his PG/ residence from Nagawara to Thanisandra, Bangalore. The finders of the above documents are requested to return the same to my below mentioned address within 15 days.
Sri. R. HARSHA, Advocate
Office at. # 665/3, I Main, K.Narayanapura, Dr. SRK Nagar Post, Bangalore -560 077
Ph : 9513377337

LOST OF DOCUMENT
I, K.V. Varadaraju S/o. Late Venkataramaiah, R/at No. U60, 6th Cross, Pipeline Road, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-03, Would like appeal to the general public that on 12-01-2021, I alongwith my friend while travelling to Peenya 2nd Stage, through Yeshwanthpur BMTC Bus Stand. Here while waiting for Peenya Bus around 7:20 PM i have lost cheque books, bearing A/c. No. 8409101103484 where i had signed 02 Cheque Books. In **One** cheque book around 17 cheque leaves were signed by me, bearing cheque No. 197421 to 197440, 20 cheque leaves, out of which 03 cheque leaves were used by me whose cheque leaves are Nos. 197434, 197435, 197437. The rest 17 cheque leaves are missing. In the **Second** Cheque book 06 cheque leaves i don't remember the number cheque leves. A Total 23 cheque leaves along with i have lost Aadhar Card, Railway Identity Card also.
If any-body Finders please call 9964308283 or intimate above address or contact nearest police station.

ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸೂಚನೆ
ಎರಡು ಸಾವಿರದ ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತೊಂದನೇ ಇಸವಿ, ಜನವರಿ ಮಾಹೆ ತಾರೀಖು ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತು (20/01/2021)ರಲ್ಲಿ,
ಶ್ರೀ ತೇಜಸ್‌ಗೌಡ ಎಂ.ಯು. ಸುಮಾರು 21 ವರ್ಷ S/o ಶ್ರೀ ಉಮೇಶ್‌ಗೌಡ ಎಂ.ಬಿ., ನಂ. 86, 3ನೇ ಮುಖ್ಯ ರಸ್ತೆ, 4ನೇ ಅಡ್ಡರಸ್ತೆ ಡಾಲರ್ಸ್ ಕಾಲೋನಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು-560 078 ಇಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಸವಿರುವ ನಿಮಗೆ,
ದಿ।। ಹೆಚ್.ಪಿ. ರಾಜಶೇಖರ ಶೆಟ್ಟಿಯವರ ಧರ್ಮಪತ್ನಿ ಆರ್.ಎಂ. ನಿರ್ಮಲ ಸುಮಾರು 67 ವರ್ಷ(1) ಮತ್ತು ದಿ।। ಹೆಚ್.ಪಿ. ರಾಜಶೇಖರ ಶೆಟ್ಟಿಯವರ ಎರಡನೇ ಮಗ ಪ್ರಶಾಂತ್ ಹೆಚ್.ಆರ್. ಸುಮಾರು 47 ವರ್ಷ(2) ಆದ ನಾವುಗಳಿಬ್ಬರೂ ಸಹ ಒಪ್ಪಿ ಬರೆಸಿಕೊಟ್ಟ ಕ್ರಯ ಒಪ್ಪಂದದ ಮುಂಗಡ ಕರಾರು ಪತ್ರವೇನೆಂದರೆ;
ಷೆಡ್ಯೂಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವರಿಸಿರುವಂತೆ ಕೆಂಗೇರಿ ಹೋಬಳಿ, ರಾಮಸಂದ್ರ ಗ್ರಾಮ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ತಾ. 15/06/2004 ರಲ್ಲಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳವರಿಂದ BDS/ALN/(S)SR(K.T) 28/2004-05ನೇ ನಂಬರ್ ವ್ಯವಸಾಯೇತರ ವಾಸದ ಉದ್ದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಭೂಪರಿವರ್ತನೆಯಾಗಿರುವ ಸರ್ವೆ ನಂ. 80/2 (ಎಂಭತ್ತು ಸ್ಲಾಷ್ ಎರಡು)ನೇ ನಂಬರಿನ ನಕ್ಷೆಯ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಎ.ಪಿ. 187ನೇ ನಂಬರುಳ್ಳ 4 (ನಾಲ್ಕು)ನೇ ನಂಬರು ನಿವೇಶನವಾಗಿ, ಹಾಲಿ E-ಖಾತಾ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 150200301900400194, ಸ್ವತ್ತಿನ ನಂ. 187/80/04ನೇ ನಂಬರು ನಿವೇಶನ ಪ್ರಶಾಂತ್ ಹೆಚ್.ಆರ್. ಆದ ನನಗೂ ಮತ್ತು ನಮ್ಮ ತಂದೆಯವರಾದ ಶ್ರೀ ಹೆಚ್.ಪಿ. ರಾಜಶೇಖರ ಶೆಟ್ಟಿ ರವರಿಗೆ ಜಂಟಿಯಾಗಿ ತಾ. 10/12/2004ರಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಂಗೇರಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಉಪ ನೋಂದಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ ಕಛೇರಿ 1ನೇ ಪುಸ್ತಕ C.D.No.KEND 167ರಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಿ KEN-1-33862/2004-05ನೇ ನಂಬರಾಗಿ ನೋಂದಾಯಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿರುವ ಕ್ರಯಪತ್ರದ ಮೂಲಕ ಶ್ರೀ ಬಿ.ಜಿ. ಶಿವಣ್ಣ ರವರ ಮಗ ಶ್ರೀ ಬಿ.ಎಸ್. ಪುಟ್ಟರಾಜು ರವರಿಂದ ಶುದ್ಧ ಕ್ರಯವಾಗಿ ಸ್ವಯಾರ್ಜಿತವಾಗಿ ಬಂದಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಸದರಿ ನಿವೇಶನಕ್ಕೆ ನಾವಿಬ್ಬರೂ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಹಕ್ಕುದಾರ, ಮಾಲೀಕ, ಸ್ವಾಧೀನಗಾರರಾಗಿ, ಶ್ರೀ. ಹೆಚ್.ಪಿ. ರಾಜಶೇಖರ ಶೆಟ್ಟಿರವರು 30/10/2020ರಲ್ಲಿ ಮೃತಪಟ್ಟ ತರುವಾಯ ನಾವಿಬ್ಬರೂ ಕಾನೂನುಬದ್ಧ ಹಕ್ಕುದಾರ, ಮಾಲೀಕ, ಸ್ವಾಧೀನದಾರಾಗಿ, ಈಗ ಅದನ್ನು ಮಾರಾಟ ಮಾಡಲು ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಿದ್ದು, 20/01/2021ರಂದು ಕ್ರಯಪತ್ರ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದು ಷೆಡ್ಯೂಲ್ ದಾಖಲೆ ನಿಮ್ಮ ವಶಕ್ಕೆ ನೀಡಿದ ನಂತರ 20 ದಿನಗಳ ವಾಯಿದೆ ನಿಷ್ಕರ್ಷೆ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಿರುತ್ತೇವೆ.
ಷೆಡ್ಯೂಲ್: ಪೂರ್ವಕ್ಕೆ: ಬಿಡಿಎ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಪಶ್ಚಿಮಕ್ಕೆ: ಬೇರೆಯವರ ಸ್ವತ್ತು, ಉತ್ತರಕ್ಕೆ: 3ನೇ ನಂಬರು ನಿವೇಶನ, ದಕ್ಷಿಣಕ್ಕೆ: 5ನೇ ನಂಬರು ನಿವೇಶನ. ಈ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ಪೂರ್ವ ಪಶ್ಚಿಮ: ಉತ್ತರದ ಕಡೆಗೆ: 99-0 (ತೊಂಭತ್ತೊಂಭತ್ತು) ಅಡಿ, ದಕ್ಷಿಣದ ಕಡೆ: 106-0 (ಒಂದು ನೂರ ಆರು), ಉತ್ತರ ದಕ್ಷಿಣ: 50-0 (ಐವತ್ತು) ಒಟ್ಟು 5125 ಚದರ ಅಡಿಗಳು. ಈ ರೀತಿಯ ಅಳತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಚೆಕ್ಕುಬಂದಿಗೊಳಪಟ್ಟ ಖಾಲಿ ನಿವೇಶನಕ್ಕೆ ಕ್ರಯ ಪತ್ರದ ಮುಂಗಡ ಕರಾರುಪತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟಿರುತ್ತದೆ.
ಈ ಸ್ವತ್ತಿನ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಯಾರದಾದರೂ ತಂಟೆ ತಕರಾರು ಇದ್ದರೆ ಈ ದಿನಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟವಾದ 10 ದಿನಗಳ ಒಳಗಾಗಿ ಇವರನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸುವುದು: ಶ್ರೀ ತೇಜಸ್‌ಗೌಡ ಎಂ.ಯು. ಮೊಬೈಲ್ ನಂ. 9972846688.

IN THE COURT OF XXIX ADDL. CITY CIVIL JUDGE AT BENGALURU (CCH-30)
O.S. No. 8530/2019
BETWEEN: Mrs. B. Rajani, W/o K Raghuvardhana Reddy, Aged about 40 Years, R/o No.204, BREN CELESTIA, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru-560035.
... Plaintiff
AND :
M/s. Homigo Reality Private Limited and another
...Defendants
SUMMONS TO THE DEFENDANT No. 1 BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION
M/s Homigo Reality Private Limited, Represented by its Director, Sri. Jatin Mitruka, Cin: U71000KA2015PTC081053 Having its registered office at No.2-10/1, & 2-10/1-1, Ajay Plaza, 1st Main, N.S.Palya, Banneghatta Road, Bengaluru-560 076.
Whereas the Plaintiff filed the above suit for Ejectment for the relief of Judgement and Decree against the defendants to direct the defendant No.2 to quit and deliver back vacant possession of the suit schedule 'B' property, to direct the defendant No.2 to pay a sum of Rs.66,000/- being rent from April 2019 till the termination of tenancy during June 2019 and further be pleased to direct the defendant No.2 to pay damages for the illegal occupation of the Schedule B premises amounting to Rs.88,000/- from July 2019 till end of October 2019 at the rate of Rs.22,000/- per month with interest of 12% and also to pass an order to hold an enquiry with regard to mense profit, all the suit with costs and to grant such order/relief.
You are hereby summoned to appear before this court **on 02/03/2021 at 11 AM** in person or through advocate/pleader to answer the questions to the same. Failing which the suit will be heard and determined as ex-parte.
SCHEDULE 'A' (ENTIRE PROPERTY)
All that part and parcel of the immovable property consisting of Four Floors, apartment composite residential house premises bearing PID/Katha No.582/4, Site No.4, Serenity Layout, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru-560 035, constructed thereon 11 (eleven) residential flats, measuring 2000 sq.feets with buildup area 13,000 Sq.Feets, and bounded on;
East by : Road, **West by:** Private Property, **North by;** Private Property, **South by:** Road.
SCHEDULE 'B' (FLAT)
All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing Flat No.201, 2nd Floor constructed on premises bearing PID / Khata No. 582/11, Site No.4, Serenity Layout, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru-560035, measuring 900 Sq.feet.
Given under my hand and seal of the court this the 29th day January 2021.
By order of the Court, Assistant Registrar, City Civil Court, Bangalore.
Address for Service : **Sri. D.M. Manjunath,** Advocate
Sri. A.G. Shivanna & Associates
No. 1A, GFMF, H.M.S. Complex,
Cubbonpet Main Road, Bengaluru - 560 002.

IN THE COURT OF XXIX ADDL. CITY CIVIL JUDGE AT BENGALURU (CCH-30)
O.S. No. 8529/2019
BETWEEN: Mrs. B. Rajani, W/o K Raghuvardhana Reddy, Aged about 40 Years, R/o No.204, BREN CELESTIA, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru-560035.
...Plaintiff
AND :
M/s. Homigo Reality Private Limited and another
...Defendants
SUMMONS TO THE DEFENDANT No. 1 BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION
M/s Homigo Reality Private Limited, Represented by its Director, Sri. Jatin Mitruka, Cin: U71000KA2015PTC081053 Having its registered office at No.2-10/1, & 2-10/1-1, Ajay Plaza, 1st Main, N.S.Palya, Banneghatta Road, Bengaluru-560 076.
Whereas the Plaintiff filed the above suit for Ejectment for the relief of Judgement and Decree against the defendants to direct the defendant No.2 to quit and deliver back vacant possession of the suit schedule 'B' property, to direct the defendant No.2 to pay a sum of Rs.66,000/- being rent from April 2019 till the termination of tenancy during June 2019 and further be pleased to direct the defendant No.2 to pay damages for the illegal occupation of the Schedule B premises amounting to Rs.88,000/- from July 2019 till end of October 2019 at the rate of Rs.22,000/- per month with interest of 12% and also to pass an order to hold an enquiry with regard to mense profit, all the suit with costs and to grant such order/relief.
You are hereby summoned to appear before this court **on 02/03/2021 at 11 AM** in person or through advocate/pleader to answer the questions to the same. Failing which the suit will be heard and determined as ex-parte.
SCHEDULE 'A' (ENTIRE PROPERTY)
All that part and parcel of the immovable property consisting of Four Floors, apartment composite residential house premises bearing PID/Katha No.582/4, Site No.4, Serenity Layout, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru-560 035, constructed thereon 11 (eleven) residential flats, measuring 2000 sq.feets with buildup area 13,000 Sq.Feets, and bounded on;
East by : Road, **West by:** Private Property, **North by:** Private Property, **South by:** Road.
SCHEDULE 'B' (FLAT)
All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing Flat No.202, 2nd Floor constructed on premises bearing PID / Khata No. 582/11, Site No.4, Serenity Layout, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru-560035, measuring 900 Sq.feet.
Given under my hand and seal of the court this the 29th day January 2021.
By order of the Court, Assistant Registrar, City Civil Court, Bangalore.
Address for Service : **Sri. D.M. Manjunath,** Advocate
Sri. A.G. Shivanna & Associates
No. 1A, GFMF, H.M.S. Complex,
Cubbonpet Main Road, Bengaluru - 560 002.

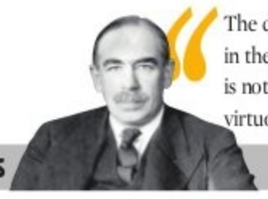
IN THE COURT OF XXIX ADDL. CITY CIVIL JUDGE AT BENGALURU (CCH-30)
O.S. No. 8528/2019
BETWEEN: Mrs. B. Rajani, W/o K Raghuvardhana Reddy, Aged about 40 Years, R/o No.204, BREN CELESTIA, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru-560035.
... Plaintiff
AND :
M/s. Homigo Reality Private Limited and another
...Defendants
SUMMONS TO THE DEFENDANT No. 1 BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION
M/s Homigo Reality Private Limited, Represented by its Director, Sri. Jatin Mitruka, Cin: U71000KA2015PTC081053 Having its registered office at No.2-10/1, & 2-10/1-1, Ajay Plaza, 1st Main, N.S.Palya, Banneghatta Road, Bengaluru-560 076.
Whereas the Plaintiff filed the above suit for Ejectment for the relief of Judgement and Decree against the defendants to direct the defendant No.2 to quit and deliver back vacant possession of the suit schedule 'B' property, to direct the defendant No.2 to pay a sum of Rs.66,000/- being rent from April 2019 till the termination of tenancy during June 2019 and further be pleased to direct the defendant No.2 to pay damages for the illegal occupation of the Schedule B premises amounting to Rs.88,000/- from July 2019 till end of October 2019 at the rate of Rs.22,000/- per month with interest of 12% and also to pass an order to hold an enquiry with regard to mense profit, all the suit with costs and to grant such order/relief.
You are hereby summoned to appear before this court **on 02/03/2021 at 11 AM** in person or through advocate/pleader to answer the questions to the same. Failing which the suit will be heard and determined as ex-parte.
SCHEDULE 'A' (ENTIRE PROPERTY)
All that part and parcel of the immovable property consisting of Four Floors, apartment composite residential house premises bearing PID/Katha No.582/4, Site No.4, Serenity Layout, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru-560 035, constructed thereon 11 (eleven) residential flats, measuring 2000 sq.feets with buildup area 13,000 Sq.Feets, and bounded on;
East by : Road, **West by:** Private Property, **North by:** Private Property, **South by:** Road.
SCHEDULE 'B' (FLAT)
All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing Flat No.402, 2nd Floor constructed on premises bearing PID / Khata No. 582/11, Site No.4, Serenity Layout, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru-560035, measuring 900 Sq.feet.
Given under my hand and seal of the court this the 29th day January 2021.
By order of the Court, Assistant Registrar, City Civil Court, Bangalore.
Address for Service : **Sri. D.M. Manjunath,** Advocate
Sri. A.G. Shivanna & Associates
No. 1A, GFMF, H.M.S. Complex,
Cubbonpet Main Road, Bengaluru - 560 002.

YOGAKSHEMAM LOANS LIMITED
B-16-00103, Door No. 28/449/1
Yogakshemam Appartment
Thiruvambady P.O.
Thrissur – 680 022
GOLD AUCTION NOTICE
The borrowers, in specific and the public, in general, are hereby notified that public auction of the gold ornaments of pledged in the below accounts is proposed to be conducted at the following branches on 19.02.2021 from 10 a.m. onwards. We are auctioning gold ornaments of defaulted customers who have failed to make payment of his/her loan amount despite being notified by registered letters. Unauctioned items shall be auctioned on any other days without further notice. Changes in venue or date (if any) will be displayed at auction centre and on website without any further notice.
List of Pledges:
J P NAGAR: 210119103677, 3678, 3760, 3808. **KAMMANAHALI :** 210118102818, 2848, 2849, 2862, 2887, 3355. **PEENIYA :** 210134101063. **VIGNANA NAGAR :** 210130100312. **MATHIKERE :** 21011 4104441, 4442, 4461, 4467, 4468, 4476, 4477, 4501, 4530, 4580, 4622, 4638, 4647, 4648, 4653. **RT NAGAR :** 210111103603, 3609, 3613, 3651, 3684, 3685, 3693, 3698, 3765, 4486. **SUNKADAKATTE :** 210115102925, 2947, 2960, 2963, 2967, 2968, 2969, 2970, 2972, 2973, 2979, 2980, 2981, 2982, 3022, 3024, 3025, 3026, 3042, 3091, 3096, 3104, 3117. **BANNARGHATTA :** 210123100765, 774, 781, 783. **T DASARAHALLI :** 210121101330
Persons wishing to participate in the above auction shall comply with the following:- Interested Bidders should submit **Rs. 25,000/-** or 2% of the reserve price whichever is less (refundable to unsuccessful bidders) by way of DD (Drawn on Yogakshemam Loans Ltd.) one day prior to the auction. Bidders should carry valid ID card / PAN card. For more details please contact: **0487-2335719.**
Authorised Officer,
Yogakshemam Loans Ltd.

QuoteExpress

IF YOU'RE GOING THROUGH HELL, KEEP GOING › WINSTON CHURCHILL

EDITORIAL



"The decadent international but individualistic capitalism, in the hands of which we found ourselves after the War, is not a success. It is not intelligent, beautiful, just, or virtuous—and it doesn't deliver the goods"

John Maynard Keynes

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

A YEAR AFTER CORONA ENTERED INDIA, KERALA STILL BATTLES ON

It has been just over one year since India reported its first case of Covid-19 and as far as the country's battle against the pandemic is concerned, the worst appears to be over, though the threat is still to pass. However, the battle narrative of one state stands in stark contrast to that of the rest of the country. Kerala reported the nation's first infection on January 30 last year—a student who returned from Wuhan—and the state was hailed as a model in the initial days of the outbreak for the way it contained the virus. Its administration was praised for the effective and timely response and its chief minister and health minister for the leadership they provided. One year on, its reputation lies shattered. Consider this: Kerala currently accounts for nearly half of the fresh cases reported in the country, tops the table in number of patients, has a test positivity rate that's nearly double the national average, and is the third most affected in terms of confirmed infections, behind only Maharashtra and Karnataka. The only silver lining is the death count: It has one of the lowest case fatality ratios in the country.

So what went wrong? Many things. One, complacency after the initial success. The government seemed more focused on maintaining its image (by keeping the numbers down) than coming up with and implementing measures to effectively deal with the virus. Two, a baffling testing strategy that failed to keep pace with the rising infections. The overdependence on the less-reliable antigen tests—which accounted for two-thirds of the total tests—is said to be a major factor. Three, relaxations allowed for festivals. While Onam triggered the first big spike, Christmas and New Year contributed to the spread. Four, protests and an election. Even as the Covid restrictions did not bother political parties that organised nonstop mass protests, all rules were blatantly ignored in the recent local body election. It's a situation that the state brought upon itself. The administration seems to have finally woken up to the enormity of the crisis at hand and decided to tighten vigil and ramp up tests. One thing is certain—with the situation threatening to spiral out of control, there's no time to lose. A course correction in Kerala's anti-Covid strategy is imperative.

SALARY REVISION BALL IN KCR'S COURT

The recommendations of the first Pay Revision Commission (PRC) in Telangana have come as a shocker to the five lakh state government employees and pensioners. The main suggestion the C R Biswal-headed PRC made was fixing a fitment of 7.5% on basic pay. It also recommended the extension of the age of superannuation from the present 58 to 60 years, apart from several pro-employee suggestions. But as soon as the report was out, the employees exploded in anger, saying that they expected the fitment to be more than 63%. Now the ball is in Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's court.

The last PRC, headed by P K Agarwal, had recommended a 29% fitment when it submitted its report to the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh government just three days ahead of the bifurcation of the state on June 2. The KCR government had hiked it to 43%, which sent the employees into raptures. The present commission, on the contrary, ignited passions as the recommended 7.5% fitment was the second lowest in the history of united AP, the first one being 5% in 1974. Another suggestion that riled the employees was scaling down HRA from 30%, 20%, 14.5% and 12% in four slabs to 24%, 17%, 13% and 11%, respectively.

There is no disputing the fact that 7.5% fitment is very low, while 63% is way too ambitious. But expecting KCR to revise the figure to something more acceptable begs the question as to why to have a commission at all if the political establishment is to take the final call. The commission's argument was that the total salary and pension expenditure increased from ₹16, 378 crore in 2014-15 to ₹35, 282 crore in 2017-18. Similarly the expenditure on major subsidies as a percentage of revenue has gone from 32.76% in 2016-17 to 52.4% in 2019-20. Coupled with the expenditure on salaries and establishment, it amounts to 89.86% of the total budget, leaving hardly any scope for taking up other developmental activities. This is something the CM would factor in while formulating a revised fitment policy.

Businesses and marketers typically see the rural market as the biggest one to tap. But there are some things we must not do to rural India, come what may

THINKING DESI, BEING DESI & PROTECTING RURAL SPACES

HARISH BIJOOR

Brand Guru & Founder, Harish Bijoor Consults

AMIT BANDRE

It's Budget Day today. The honourable Finance Minister of India will table the Budget and its recommendations in the House of Parliament, even as you finish reading this.

As we take the usual approach to Budget 2021 with demands of every kind, I have hopes of my own and want to walk you through rural India and its needs. Maybe not its wants. Most certainly not its desires. And definitely not its aspirations. I am going to just take you through five things we must not do to rural India, come what may. Businesses and marketers typically see the rural opportunity as the biggest one to tap. There is always a clamour for sops to be able to penetrate rural India and percolate every urban product and service into the gut of our mother market. If Budget 2021 fulfils these ambitions of mine, or for that matter accepts it as an ethos of development as we want it to be, I will be the happiest of them all.

Five things we must do in and for rural markets:

1. Preserve what is left of good rural practice the way it is: Rural is really not a geography. Instead, it is a way of life practiced by millions. In many ways it involves a lot. A little that urban folk think is good and a lot that they think is bad. I really wish we would stop passing value judgements of good and bad, and instead try to preserve a lot of rural practice the way it is. There is a lot of merit in it. Merit that we seldom see through the tinted urban lenses that lots of us marketers, business folk and urban people wear.

Outdoor defecation in the fields, the ability to feel comfortable in clothes that fit loosely and look plain, the ability to live in the same clothes for days on end and lots more are habits frowned upon. Let's list out all the frown-factors of rural people and their usage, attitude and habits, and do an audit as to what is bias and what is positive-think. We just might surprise ourselves and our biased orientations.

I ran a qualitative exercise on a set of urban educated and urban-lived set of bankers. A total sample of 205. I then got together an exhaustive list of 42 dominant "frown-factors" of rural lives. When I actually got them to do a neutral audit on it with reality factors outweighing negative biases, only three of the 42 swam. The rest sunk in the mire of our biases. Let's think our biases out. Let's help preserve rural practice that is good for all.

2. Create positive distribution networks that involve rural folk: This is a big need. The rural hinterland of India is huge. We are talking of 6,43,700 villages at last count, dispersed across a terrain of 29,80,489 square km. The rural Indian's wants and needs are as deep and wide as that of the urban person's. There is a deep need to spread every positive product and service to rural India. The best efforts to date have still kept a big chunk of the rural consumer dispossessed, as far as the goodies of modern life is concerned.

A great way to reach out to the entire set of people out there is to empower rural folk in the distribution chain by literally insisting on a distribution system and network that involves rural folk in every link of the chain. This will really help create positive job-networks for people in the thousands of towns and villages. The ability to work locally and get back home in the evening to enjoy their *litti chokha* made by mom or dad is a great thing to make happen. It's time to create and invest in local networks of sales-folk from the realms of the rural masses, all waiting to embrace a livelihood in a sector outside of agriculture, which is a struggle by itself.

> Rural is really not a geography. Instead, it is a way of life practiced by millions. ... Desi pride is a movement in itself. There is a reinvigorated 'Desi Gabru' movement in many parts of rural India led by Punjab and Haryana. Time to take this mainstream. Maybe a Government of India-led initiative?

3. Help rural folk monetise idle-time: An idle-time study carried out by me in 87 rural clusters in India indicates gory numbers. A rural man is under-employed by far. On an average day, the man is gainfully employed for only as many as 2 hours and 20 minutes. A woman on the other hand is gainfully employed (and this includes housework) for 1 hour and 58 minutes. The rest of otherwise considered productive time is really idle-time.

Not crazily so, this idle time is really the time of idle gossip, idle and unproductive politics, and idle and kill-the-time oriented digital involvements such as Instagram Reels, Facebook and every other Tiktok clone app today.

We need to really think of ways and means to tap this huge idle-time market and get it onto creative and positive pursuit. It need not be the pursuit of wealth, but it needs to certainly be the pursuit of happiness at least.

4. Help knit rural market output to global market needs, wants, desires and aspirations: There is a huge issue of a rude and cruel disconnect between the excellent products rural India produces as handmade, close-to-nature and passion-made, and front-ended market and marketing connect. What rural India produces has relevance to the new need of a new world in the global developed and supra-developed markets today. We need to help establish new market linkages on this count. Let's connect the dots.

5. Help build pride in rural as the way to be: There is a big marketing campaign possible on this count. We need to get going on this. Desi pride is a movement in itself. There is a re-invigorated "Desi Gabru" movement in many parts of rural India led by Punjab and Haryana. Time to take this mainstream. Maybe a Government of India-led initiative?

In the beginning, all of us are rural in our usage, attitude and consumption patterns. And in the end, we are rural as well. Let's recognise this with pride, shall we now?

(harishbijoor@hotmail.com)

ROBBING COLLECTIVE PAULS TO PAY SELECTIVE PETERS

SATYA MOHANTY

Former Secretary, Government of India. Views are personal

This inversion of Rudyard Kipling's statement will appear strange in 21st century capitalism. Kipling had adapted the original idiom to criticise the concept of income redistribution and collectivism. The title here will give a hint of Marx's theory of surplus labour, which would have surely attracted the derisive appellation of 'commie' 30 years ago. But now not many will be surprised by how this trickle-up is functioning when the system pays lip service to trickle down and most are inured to the deep-rooted gaming that goes on to impoverish the average citizen i.e, the poor and the middle class.

Ask any Uber driver the fairness of payment or any small businessman who sells to an aggregator like Amazon, and you will hear a litany of complaints about exploitation. Eternal optimists will say this is better than the option available to them in the normal course and hence welcome. How is it different from the karmic theory, which explains suffering as something reasonably deserved as per one's karma, or an oppressive employer with the questionable pride over doing a better job than others in giving a lifeline to many? The wise may discard it as the inevitable consequence of 'network economy' where monopolies are inevitable. A good part of the 20th century passed by with a repulsion towards monopolies, cartelisation and consolidation of economic power. But the last 50 years gave rise to a different thinking, a new level of tolerance of economic power and emasculation of the state.

The public choice theorist found out very correctly that there can be regulatory capture and politicians cannot be expected to always act in public interest. Instead politicians advance their agenda and interest. The world of knowledge always puts out some truth, though not the whole truth. Following neo-classical thoughts, the vacation of the state from many fields took place. But the evacuation of the state from many activities did not mean it just withdrew. The state could still lay down the rules, change laws, support cronies and make winners out of the most unlikely personages. The borderline between politicians and entrepreneurs got blurred. It is a lot more complicated in a country that had an entrenched business class. Once they became powerful economically, a symbiotic relationship with politics had to emerge. Today, the vaccine approved for inoculation is suspected in terms of safety and efficacy. People are afraid that they are being short-changed in a venal set-up. One can get a similar thread in the farmers' agitation. They feel that their money in paise and small rupees will go away to big business houses and they are being robbed in the Byzantine process of law-making.

Everyone knows that better than changing the rules of a game is changing the game itself. The more powerful one is, the better placed he/she is to change the rule. The change of the rule to support the better-off happens away from spotlight. When people are losing jobs, new ones are not being created and the economy is contracting, the stock market is going up like there is nothing called gravity. The stock market does not care for the real economy. How does one explain the profitability going up when production and sales have declined, retrenchment of labour has taken place and no new hiring is in view? The companies have saved on labour costs by reducing salaries, reducing workforce or by pure mechanisation. The profit has come not because of innovation or cost saving but by purely bringing down the labour cost. The cognoscenti say not wages but profit is showing up in the stock market climb.

> The evacuation of the state from many activities did not mean it just withdrew. The state could still lay down the rules, change laws and support cronies. The borderline between politicians and the entrepreneurs got blurred

Automation and mechanisation with the easy bank loans, continuing with contingent labour with a much lower salary and lobbying for watering down the labour laws are going on for some time now. Some states have already suspended labour laws. They will be surprised as to why there is no investment, no new employment and no new factories in their states. But the leitmotif is clear: the rise of pro-business policies with different shades of cronyism, not pro-market ones. It was spotted some time ago by Dani Rodrick and Arvind Subramanian that the Indian government is more pro-business than pro-market. It has only become more unabashed.

In a recent article, the economist Angus Deaton said, "Milton Friedman insisted that inequality is not a problem and argued against efficient taxation. The jurist Richard Posner, meanwhile, brought the ideas to the judiciary arguing that justice requires society to maximise wealth." He added that this resulted in producers being favoured over consumers and the wealthy over the needy, and thus inequality came to be perceived not as a problem but a natural state. Consequently one can conclude that politicians the world over got inured to it. But politicians never forget their interests. Meanwhile, the court system became a system for the rich and the politicians. The latter had taken control over them to facilitate the selective Peters to have their way. Of course, there are several benefits in this approach including election funding.

The pandemic has given a wake-up call on many fronts. One of them is the arguable case of the state coming back like the Keynesians believed. But now what is clear is the collective Pauls are being robbed, even when stimulus is given. It is also difficult to distinguish between the politicians and businessmen. It is already impossible to say which is which as George Orwell said in his book 'Animal Farm'. If the state comes back, will the politicians pursue the interests of the plutocrats or the public interest of a kinder and more equal society? It is difficult to tell how the advantages are stacked up, but that is to the benefit of the selective Peters. Finally, everything is being transformed, whether creation or destruction are taking place or not.

(satya_mohanty@rediffmail.com)

MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Health, edu and SMEs

Budgets have mostly been a mere exercise of presentation of revenues and expenditures. One fervently hopes that this one will not disappoint us. It should focus on development of rural infrastructure, healthcare and education, skill development and generation of employment instead of merely doling out subsidies. The hospitality sector and the SMEs too need support.

R Sriramprasad, Bengaluru

Focus on ASHA workers too

This is with reference to *Budget push can turn ASHA workers into digital health agents* (Jan 31). As the author says, they should be given proper remuneration and incentivised to be part of the National Digital Health Mission's tech ecosystem.

M S R Rao, Bengaluru

Hands that feed the nation

This is with reference to the article *Wrong: Teargas and lathis for farmers (Jan 31)*. The article brilliantly captures the state of affairs in India today. The government is trying to sever the hands that feed the nation. It is ironic that despite its efforts to make our country a Hindu Rashtra, the ruling party at the Centre is ignoring the concept of karma.

Ratheesh Chandran, Thiruvalla

Entry of corporates

The farm laws permit the corporate bodies to enter into agribusiness. Even if there are more rounds of discussion, the government may offer some cosmetic changes without altering the basic points as this springs from its deep-rooted ideology.

C Rajasekaran, Kumbakonam

Cops were attacked, injured

It is lamentable that after several rounds of talks in two months, the country witnessed violence on Republic Day. No government wants to use teargas and lathis against protestors unless there is provocation. The writer is silent about the numerous attacks against policemen and the fact that more than 100 cops were injured in the violence.

S Arjun Prasanna, Bengaluru

Extraordinary restraint

The Delhi Police displayed extraordinary restraint at great personal cost when confronted with armed thugs brandishing swords and driving tractors recklessly. Imagine if the police had fired a single shot in self-defence?

Gopi Krishnan, Bengaluru

Silencing criticism

This is with reference to the editorial *Invoking sedition law against journos and others an overreach* (Jan 30). The BJP has become so powerful that it unsparingly restrains anyone who criticises it—politicians, writers, students, et al.

Philip Alexander, Bengaluru

Using a colonial law

Sedition charges have been filed against leading journalists like Rajdeep Sardesai and Mrinal Pande, and also farm leaders who were not present where the violence took place. Democracy is about discussing the issues with people concerned, not using laws that the colonisers framed and used to strangulate those who raised their voice against their unjust rule. The sedition charges should be withdrawn.

P Madhan, Karaikudi

Added fuel to the fire

The journalists concerned should have checked the facts before they broadcasted it. The mere fact that they have backtracked does not make the mistake any less serious, as it had the potential of inciting even more violence. Penal action is necessary.

D V Madhava Rao, Bengaluru

Ranji matches were needed

It is sad that the BCCI has cancelled the Ranji Trophy matches this year due to Covid. It is an important platform for youngsters to prove their mettle. When the BCCI can conduct IPL matches, then why not Ranji games? They may not be commercially profitable for the board unlike the former, but are needed for players to improve their standards.

K R Kumar, Chennai

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Chairman of the Board: **Manoj Kumar Sonthalia** Editor: **G S Vasu**

Resident Editor (Karnataka) : **Santwana Bhattacharya*** Published by **R K Jhunjhunwala** on behalf of Express Publications (Madurai) Private Limited, at No. 1, Queen's Road, Bengaluru - 560 001 and printed by him at Express Press, Plot No. 2A, Bommasandra Industrial Area, 4th Phase, Survey No. 46, Part Yarandahalli Village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk. Bengaluru - 560 099. **Bengaluru.** Vol. 57, No. 27 RNI Reg. No. 3457/1960. Phone: 080-22866893. * Responsible for selection of News under the PRB Act. **Copyright:** Express Publications (Madurai) Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any manner, electronic or otherwise, in whole or in part, without prior written permission is prohibited.

TWEETS OF THE DAY

Sitaram Yechury @SitaramYechury
Delhi Police comes directly under Amit Shah. That means direct political accountability for its actions, be it targeting farmers or arresting journalists

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra @priyankagandhi
BJP govt wants to trample upon voice of farmers, but they've forgotten that the more you suppress, the more voices will rise against your atrocities

Smriti Z Irani @smritiirani
Women of our Nation are scripting success stories in every field be it aviation or defence. Govt stands committed towards empowerment of women

Nation saddened by insult of Tricolour: PM

In his monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat, Modi urges youth to write about freedom struggle for 'India 75' celebrations

This month, we got good news from the cricket pitch... Amidst all this, the country was saddened by the insult to the Tricolour on January 26 in Delhi. We have to infuse times to come with new hope

Narendra Modi, PM

'Fastest vax drive'

Lauding the country's Covid-19 vaccination, programme, the PM said, "We are not only running the world's biggest vaccination drive but we are also the fastest in vaccinating our citizens. India has vaccinated 30 lakh corona warriors in 15 days."

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

IN his monthly radio programme Mann ki Baat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that the country is pained at the insult of the Tricolour, referring to incidents at Red Fort on Republic Day. A section of agitating farmers ran riot at the historical monument and hoisted a flag of the Sikh religion that day.

Making a mention of India's victory in the Test series in Australia, the PM said their hard work and teamwork had been inspirational. "Amidst all this, the country was saddened by the insult to the Tricolour on the 26th of January in Delhi," said Modi, without mentioning the three farm laws, against which farmers of northern India have been protesting for over two months.

The PM in a meeting with floor leaders of different political parties on Saturday had said that the government sticks to the assurances given to the farmer leaders, including holding the farm laws in abeyance for a year and a half.

The Prime Minister also made an appeal to the youngsters of the country to write about freedom fighters of their regions and tales associated with the freedom struggle. The government is gearing up to launch 'Amrit Mahotsav' to commemorate the 75th anniversary of India's independence. Saying that details are available with the Ministry of Education, Modi sought out 'thought leaders' to write on the local icons who fought for the freedom of the country.

"Write books about the saga of valour during the period of freedom struggle in your area. Now, as India will celebrate 75 years of her freedom, your writings will be the best tribute to those heroes of our freedom. An initiative has been taken for young writers for the purpose of 'India Seventy-Five'. This will encourage young writers of all states and of all languages," Modi remarked.

Authorities use earthmover to dig a road at Singhu border in New Delhi on Sunday in order to stop the farmers from bringing their tractors to the area | SHEKHAR YADAV

SAD CHIEF SUKHBIR BADAL MEETS TIKAIT

SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal on Sunday met farmer leader Rakesh Tikait at Ghazipur border and presented him with a 'siropa' (robe of honour), as he assured his party's support to the farmers movement. Badal said Tikait had made the farming community proud by following the footsteps of his father Mahendra Singh Tikait, a party statement said.

FIR against editor over tweet on farmer's death

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Uttar Pradesh Police has filed an FIR against founding editor of news portal *The Wire* Siddharth Varadarajan for tweeting a news report that said, quoting farmer Navreet Singh's family, that he had died due to police firing during the Republic Day tractor rally.

The Delhi Police had released CCTV footage showing the farmer's tractor had overturned after it hit a police barricade. The story reported on Friday said the deceased's family had refused to accept the police claim.

The report quoted Singh's grandfather as saying, "The doctor even told me that even though he had seen the bullet injury, he can do nothing as his hands are tied."

The FIR has been registered under Sections 153-B and 505(2) of the IPC is Rampur district, where Singh came from. Reacting to the move, Vardarajan tweeted alleging the UP Police was indulging in "malicious prosecution".

Speaking to this newspaper, he said, "The case against me and will not stand, but what the government really wants to ensure is that the dead man's family does not repeat is questions and is silenced. Singh's family's doubts about the post mortem and the role of the police may or may not be valid, but denying them the right to air those adds to their grief... The message is that if you even quote people accusing the police of having done something they deny, you can be jailed on serious charges."

What's the IPC provision for 'malicious prosecution'? Here is UP Police indulging in it, filing an FIR against me for tweeting about what the grandfather of farmer killed in the tractor parade had said on record

Siddharth Varadarajan, editor, The Wire

Earlier, on Vardarajan's tweeting the report, Rampur district magistrate had said, "We ardently request you to please let's be sticking to facts and facts only. We hope our request will be sincerely taken up by you."

He also attached an 'official declaration' in his tweet that said the doctors involved in Singh's post mortem had denied speaking to the media or any other person.

Vardarajan replied, "Story has already been updated to include the official declaration by the three doctors."

Rahul condemns journalist's arrest

The Congress slammed the Centre over the arrest of a scribe at Singhu border and FIRs against several senior journalists. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi tagged a video showing Mandeep Punia being held by police tweeted, "Those who fear truth arrest honest journalists." Party spokesperson Supriya Shrinate condemned the sedition cases filed against MP Shashi Tharoor and several journalists including Mrinal Pande, Rajdeep Sardesai, Zafar Agha and Vinod Jose.

Punjab CM calls all-party meeting

Alleging that protesting farmers are being beaten up by police and assaulted by goons at Delhi borders, Punjab CM Amarinder Singh has called an all-party meeting on Tuesday to evolve a consensus on the way forward. Singh urged all parties to join the meeting in a spirit of unity. "Only through collective efforts of all Punjabis, and all the political parties of the state, can the crisis be tackled effectively and the farmers' interests be protected," he said.

Tomar counters Pawar with 'facts' on agri laws

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

IN a sharp rebuttal to NCP supremo Sharad Pawar's criticism of the farm legislations, Union Agricultural Minister Narendra Singh Tomar tweeted "some facts" on Sunday which, he hoped will make the veteran opposition leader change his stand on the issue.

In a series of tweets, Pawar had on Saturday claimed the new agriculture laws will adversely impact the MSP procurement and weaken the mandi system. Tomar claimed the tweets were borne out of "ignorance and misinformation" about the legislation.

While backing reforms, Pawar, who was the agriculture minister in the UPA government, said during his tenure, the draft APMC Rules-2007 were framed for setting up of special markets, providing alternate platforms for farmers to market their commodities and utmost care was also taken to strengthen the existing mandi system.

The new laws will adversely impact the MSP procurement infrastructure thereby weakening the mandi system, Pawar tweeted.

Taking a jibe, Tomar said in a series of his twitter posts that Pawar is considered well-versed with the issues related to agriculture. "He has himself tried hard to bring the same reforms earlier... Since he speaks with some experience and expertise, it was dismaying to see his tweets employ a mix of ignorance & misinformation on the agriculture reforms."

The new laws, Tomar tweeted, encourage additional choice channels for farmers as they can sell their produce to anyone, anywhere with a hassle-free movement to realise better prices. This doesn't affect the MSP system.

"Under new ecosystem, mandis are not affected. Instead, they will be more competitive and cost effective in terms of services and infrastructure; and both the systems will synergistically co-exist for the interest of farmers," he said.

Dismissing Pawar's fears that the amended Essential Commodities Act may encourage corporates to "purchase commodities at lower rates, stockpile and sell at higher prices", Tomar said under the Act, the government can intervene in case of war, famine, excessive price rise, grave natural calamities and other extraordinary circumstances.

Mandeep Punia being taken away by police | TWITTER

Media outrage at arrest of scribe on Singhu border

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

FREELANCE journalist Mandeep Punia was arrested by Delhi Police and sent to 14 days of judicial custody on Sunday, after a court rejected his bail plea. A metropolitan magistrate court listed his bail application for hearing on Monday and asked the investigating officer to file his response.

According to Delhi Police, Punia was detained on Saturday night at Singhu border for misbehaving with police personnel. An FIR under IPC Sections 186 (obstructing a public servant in discharge of public functions) and 353 (assaulting a public servant in execution of duty) was filed against him at Alipur Police Station. IPC Sections 332 and 34 have also been pressed against him.

Other than Punia, journalist Dharmendar Singh was also detained but he was released after signing an undertaking.

Condemning the police's action, media organisations said such crackdowns curtail the media's right to freedom of expression. The Press Club of India, Indian Women's Press Corps and the Press Association demanded his immediate release and said no journalist should be stopped while carrying out their duties.

"Such crackdowns impinge on the media's right to report freely and interfere with our right to freedom of expression, and freedom of the press as guaranteed by the Constitution of India," the bodies said in a joint statement.

Journalists came out in support of Punia by holding demonstrations outside the Delhi Police headquarters, demanding his release. They also took out a protest march from the police headquarters to the Press Club. They said Punia, who contributes to *The Caravan* and *Junputh*, has been reporting on the agitation from the beginning and his arrest "is part of the government crackdown on journalists to prevent them from doing their job independently and freely."

Delhi Police used brutal force while picking him (Punia) up and did not share his whereabouts to other media colleagues the entire night
—Joint statement by IWPC, Press Club of India and Press Association

Haryana extends internet suspension

The Haryana government on Sunday further extended the suspension of mobile internet services in 14 districts till 5 pm on February 1 to "prevent any disturbance of peace and public order". According to an official statement, the government has extended the suspension of mobile internet services in districts of Ambala, Kurukshetra, Karnal, Kaithal, Panipat, Hisar, Jind, Rohtak, Bhiwani, Sirsa, Fatehabad, Charkhi Dadri, Sonipat and Jhajjar till 5 pm on February 1.

25% Indians have antibodies against Covid

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA @ New Delhi

NEARLY 25% of India's population or one in every four persons has shown evidence of past infection of coronavirus, the third national serosurvey conducted by the ICMR recently has revealed.

While the number of confirmed cases stands at just over 1 crore, the survey, whose findings are yet to be released, has estimated that the country's actual Covid-19 infection size is 30 crore, sources familiar with the results confirmed to this newspaper.

"The figures are much higher in many cities, strengthening the epidemiological theory that some cities in the country may be approaching herd immunity, as evident in the falling daily numbers of new cases," said an official associated with the exercise. "Like the previous two surveys, the seropositivity has been found to be way higher, particularly in urban slums and generally in urban areas as compared to rural areas."

The results of the survey are likely to be made public within the next few days, he said.

The third serosurveillance exercise carried out in December and January was aimed at testing for antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 in blood samples of 400 randomly selected persons from each of the same 70 districts across 22 states where the previous two surveys in May and August were conducted.

In addition, samples from 100 healthcare workers from both government and private facilities in each of these 70 districts were also collected.

Unlike the previous surveys that only looked for antibodies against the viral nucleocapsid, researchers in the third survey also tested for spike protein antibodies which last longer in the bloodstream.

The first survey in May-June had shown an average seroprevalence of less than 1% and estimated the countrys infection size to be about 60 lakh. However, the presence of antibodies in some clusters in big cities was found to be far higher than the national average.

Researchers in many countries have estimated the epidemic will slow down rapidly when about 60-70% of the population in an area has been infected and recovered.

Filmmakers, threatre owners thank govt for allowing full occupancy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

CINEMA halls will operate at 100 per cent capacity from Monday, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar said on Sunday, while releasing the standard operating procedure (SOP) on preventive measures for Covid-19.

The restrictions put in place due to the pandemic are on the verge of ending, he said.

The SOP said no exhibition of films will be allowed in containment zones and that states/UTs may consider proposing additional measures as per their field assessment.

Adequate physical distancing of at least six feet has to be followed outside the auditoriums, common areas and waiting areas at all times, and use of face covers/masks at all times will be mandatory. The SOP also mandates self-monitoring of health by all and reporting any illness at the earliest to state and district helpline.

Use of Aarogya Setu app is advisable.

Welcoming the decision, the Producers Guild of India tweeted to "extend our sincere gratitude" to "Javadekar ji and everyone involved in facilitating this important step in our industry's recovery."

The Multiplex Association of India also took to Twitter and shared that they were grateful to the minister for the decision and thanked actor-BJP MP Sunny Deol for his support.

The minister also said digital booking of tickets, and staggered show timings in order to avoid overcrowding will be encouraged. Sufficient number of box office counters will be opened and purchase of tickets at the box office will be allowed throughout the day in addition to the option of booking in advance to avoid crowding at the sale counters.s

Oppn to press for repeal of farm laws in Parl

NEW DELHI: The government on Sunday said Parliament will first take up discussions on the Motion of Thanks to the address of President Ram Nath Kovind to the joint sitting of the two Houses. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Prahlad Joshi said the Opposition can raise important issues in the second half of the Budget session.

The first half of the session is set to conclude on February 13 instead of the scheduled February 15, and the second half will commence from March 9 and conclude on April 8.

Joshi said the government is ready to answer any questions of the Opposition. The Opposition is bracing up to corner the government on the contentious farm laws, making their intent clear during the all-party meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday.

The NDA floor managers are gearing up to the prospects of the Opposition insisting on the two Houses taking up the adjournment motions to repeal the contentious farm laws right after the presentation of the Budget on Monday. There will be restricted media presence to cover the proceedings. *ENS*

EXPRESS READ

'Govt schemes in line with Swamiji's ideas'

New Delhi: Speaking on 125th anniversary celebrations of *Prabuddha Bharata*, a monthly journal of Ramakrishna Order, PM Narendra Modi said Central schemes have been designed in line with Swami Vivekanand's philosophy that the benefits be taken to the poor if they themselves can't come forward.

HIDEOUT BUSTED

Security forces busted a terrorist hideout in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, leading to the recovery of a large cache of arms and ammunition. The hideout was unearthed in Khet Chaka area of Budhal.

5 PEOPLE RESCUED BY ARMY FROM SNOW-BOUND SIKKIM

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	29	12	Mumbai	32	19
Bhopal	25	08	Panaji	34	22
Jaipur	25	09	Patna	20	05
Amritsar	20	05	Lucknow	23	07
Chennai	31	24	Port Blair	31	25
Kolkata	23	12	Imphal	25	07
Srinagar	05	-5	Chandigarh	21	05

'NONE EXCEPT MAMATA WILL BE LEFT IN TMC'

Shah also accuses Bengal CM of fooling farmers and depriving them of Kisan Nidhi

Amit Shah addresses a rally in West Bengal via video conferencing | PTI

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Kolkata

MAMATA Banerjee will be left alone in her party by the time Bengal goes to election, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said, taking a swipe at her for the exodus of Trinamool leaders.

The ruling party is seeing a flood of defections to the BJP, with the latest on Saturday in which five Trinamool leaders, including former forest minister Rajib Banerjee, joining the saffron party.

"By the time the elections will be held in Bengal, Mamata will turn back and see no one in the party. There will no one left except for her," Shah said, virtually addressing the BJP's rally at Howrah's Dumurjala stadium.

Shah said the TMC supremo should introspect why her party leaders are leaving the party. "The *Maa-Maati-Manush* slogan has faded into the background. Bengal won't forgive you."

Shah also accused the Bengal CM of hoodwinking the farmers by not giving their details despite announcing that her government is ready to allow the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Nidhi in her state. "After depriving farmers for the past two years, Mamata *didi* said she would allow the Kisan Nidhi scheme. When the Centre asked her to send the details of the farmers, she did not respond. Do you think that the people of Bengal do not understand your tricks? You are trying to hoodwink the poor farmers of your state by not sharing their details with the Centre," he said.

Later, TMC minister Chandrima Bhattacharya said the Centre did not send the farmers' list despite the chief minister's request.

Chirag Paswan's party to contest in Bengal

The Lok Janshakti Party, headed by Chirag Paswan, has also decided to contest the polls in Bengal. The party has made clear that it will jump into the Assembly polls of both Bengal and Assam on its own or in any alliance. Its decision is likely to give more headache to JD(U) than BJP. Confirming this, LJP general secretary Abdul Khaliq on Sunday said that the LJP has already conducted first round of meetings with leaders of the party of these states regarding the poll strategies.

EC scraps Nashik panchayat election for auction of seats

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

The ruling MVA had emerged winners in the local body polls in Maharashtra | FILE

THE Maharashtra Election Commission has cancelled the controversial Katrani village panchayat polls in Nashik where members were selected on the basis of how much they quoted in an open auction for the 11 seats.

The Commission had earlier stayed the elections held on January 15, after reports became public that seats had been auctioned.

After a probe, the entire election process was declared cancelled on Sunday. The Commission also decided to initiate action against persons who violated basic election principles and reduced the process to a farce. UPS Madan, State Election Commissioner, said they had investigated the matter, seen videos of the auctioning and on the basis of a primary probe report, the election was cancelled.

"All 11 candidates of Katrani Village Panchayat had been elected unopposed through auctions. The Commission had refused to announce the results of this unopposed election," said Madan. "Taking note of the auction complaint, the commission sought a report from the Nashik District Collector, District Superintendent of Police and Sub-Divisional Police Officer of Manmad. The commission also separately observed conversations in various submitted documents and audio recordings."

The official added that after further probe, legal action will be taken against the persons concerned as per Section 9-A of the IPC or other provisions of the Act. The Commission has also sought a detailed report.

In Karnataka too, the poll panel had warned of disqualifying candidates after reports of seats being auctioned in gram panchayats.

BJP starts early to build poll campaign on ground

MANISH ANAND @ New Delhi

BJP leaders present a memento to Union Minister Smriti Irani during the party's public rally in Howrah on Sunday | PTI

EVEN as an internal assessment shows the party reaching the halfway mark in the 294-member Bengal Assembly, BJP strategists are acutely aware of the well-oiled cadre of the ruling Trinamool Congress.

The BJP has taken an early start to the campaign for the Bengal election which is due in April-May. Former BJP chief Amit Shah and his successor J P Nadda are leading the saffron charge, with the former pushing the party leaders with the target to win over 200 seats.

"The assessment within the party currently is that reaching the halfway mark is within the reach in the prevailing situations. The exodus of TMC leaders is giving the BJP much attention in the state. But the real challenge lies when the electioneering in the real sense begins and the manner in which the TMC responds to the BJP's campaign," said a senior BJP strategist.

The BJP strategists are monitoring on the alignment of the TMC cadre and the possible understanding with the Left-Congress combine on the ground. "The principal challenge remains to build the campaign on the ground, particularly in rural areas. This may get a boost with the induction of the TMC veterans who are regional satraps. But the TMC has an edge because of the strength of its cadre and the appeal of Mamata," added the BJP strategist.

Within the BJP, the party leaders are counting on two scenarios on hypothetical joining of the forces from the ranks of TMC and the Left and the Congress.

"Either the BJP may not be able to build the campaign on the ground, which may restrict the party to two digits, or the ideological contradictions in rival camps may give a groundswell to take it beyond 200 seats on the lines of Uttar Pradesh. The BJP will need to match up to the power of the Trinamool and the Left on the polling booth level," said a senior BJP functionary.

The BJP campaign is currently seen around Shah and Nadda, with major thrust on promises to implement Central schemes, including PM-Kisan Nidhi, Ayushman Bharat and others.

ELDERS DUMPED

ACTOR APPEALS FOR SHELTER IN INDORE

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bhopal

ACTOR **Sonu Sood** has appealed to the residents of Indore to join him in building a home for the homeless elders after a team of Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) was caught on video trying to dump them outside the city.

MP CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan had ordered suspension of the deputy municipal commissioner and the dismissal of two of IMC workers.

In a video, Sood appealed to the people to work with him in this endeavour. "I want to provide the elders a roof of their own in Indore. I appeal to all Indore residents to work with me to set an example in the country, by rendering a home along with fooding and other necessary facilities to the elderly, including those abandoned by their children," Sood said in the video on Saturday.

Soon, Indore-based businessman Sanjay Lunawat extended help to the actor. "Land will never be a problem, as I'm in real estate and logistics for 20 years in Indore. Indore shouldn't get a bad name due to the fault of some persons (IMC staff)," Lunawat said.

The businessman told this newspaper that the roadmap for the project along with a suitable plot and a dedicated team will be ready in a fortnight.

DM apologises to God for 'dumping' homeless

Indore District Magistrate Manish Singh on Sunday said he has apologised to God for the local administration dumping homeless people in the cold. "Whosoever might have been at fault, we can't run away from our responsibility. Hence, we prayed to God to forgive us."

80 AEFIs in Uttarakhand, mostly minor

VINEET UPADHYAY @ Dehradun

DISPELLING the rumours surrounding Covid vaccine, Uttarakhand officials said that the hill state has reported over 80 cases of adverse events following immunisation in the first round of the Covid vaccination drive till Friday but most of these were minor.

Dr Tripti Bahuguna, a senior health official who manages adverse events, said, "A total 25,818 of around 88,000 healthcare workers have been vaccinated and no such adverse events have occurred to cause worry."

The state has, so far, vaccinated 29.33 per cent of its healthcare workers. Mostly mild symptoms like body ache, mild fever, low BP have been reported.

According to the health department, 21 adverse events were reported from Pauri Garhwal followed by 16 each in Dehradun and Udham Singh Nagar. Almora (3), Bageshwar (6), Chamoli (2), Champawat (3), Haridwar (2), Nainital (5), Pithoragarh (1), Rudraprayag (4), Tehri Garhwal (1) and Uttarkashi (4) are among those districts which reported adverse events.

Meanwhile, Uttarakhand has requested additional 200,000 doses of Covid vaccine citing Mahakumbh. The religious congregation is expected to catch pace next month with over 12 crore devotees expected to attend the event.

Congress wins 1197, BJP 1140 wards in Raj

JAIPUR: THE ruling Congress has won 1,197 out of 3,034 wards in 90 urban local bodies in Rajasthan for which the results were announced on Sunday.

The elections were held in 3,035 wards of 90 urban local bodies across 20 districts. The results have been announced in 3,034 wards. The elections on Thursday had recorded a 76.52 per cent turnout.

The opposition BJP won 1,140, BSP 1, CPI(M) 3, NCP 46, RLP 13 wards while 634 independent candidates won the elections. "The results today come as a happy news. Hearty congratulations and best wishes to all the winning candidates of the Congress Party. Thanks to the voters and thanks to the Congress workers and leaders for hard work and congratulations for this victory," tweeted CM Ashok Gehlot. *Agencies*

J'khand tribal village with walls as blackboards earns PM praise

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

PRIME Narendra Modi on Sunday lauded the initiative taken by Dumarthar village where in walls double up as blackboards for school children.

Sapan Kumar, the principal of Utkramit Madhya Vidyalalya in Jharkhand's Dumka district, had hit headlines for transforming the entire village into a classroom where walls serve as blackboard on which students solve assignments given by teachers through loudspeakers. This correspondent had earlier reported about the unique initiative.

The entire village and Kumar are happy that the initiative has put their hamlet on the national map.

With most of the children having no access to smartphones to take online classes, teachers of this tribal dominated village are using this strategy to keep classes going amid the Covid pandemic.

Kumar, as reported earlier, is also making children self-sufficient who are producing chalks, mats on which they sit while taking the classes. They are making brooms for keeping the place clean, on their own, with whatever resources available naturally in the area.

"We are really grateful to PM Modi that he has mentioned the initiative take by principal Sapan Kumar. People are so enthused that they are distributing sweets among each other and have planned a grand celebration in the village on Monday where a community fest will be organised and cultural programme will be organised," said a villager.

Children are also happy that the work done by them is being recognised by the Prime Minister in his *Mann Ki Baat*.

MERCURY DIPS

Chilai Kalan: Srinagar records -8.8 degrees, coldest night in 30 years

FAYAZ WANI @ Srinagar

THERE'S no respite from bone chilling cold in the Kashmir Valley where the night temperature in Srinagar dropped to minus 8.8 degree Celsius — the lowest in three decades.

Traditionally, the period of Chilai Kalan, which starts on December 21 and ends on January 31, are the coldest in the Valley. The MeT officials are expecting some relief as the Chilai Kalan is ending.

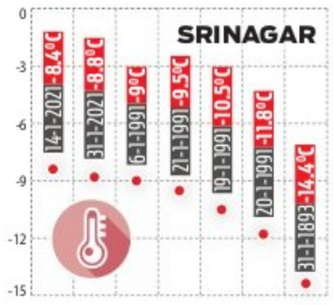
Before Sunday's minus 8.8 degrees Celsius, a MeT official said, the previous record was minus 9 degrees Celsius on January 6, 1991. The same year mercury had dipped to minus 11.8 degrees Celsius on January 20. The lowest ever temperature was recorded on January 31, 1893, when the mercury had dropped to minus 14.4 degrees Celsius in Srinagar.

There have been 17 instances in the last 38 years when Srinagar recorded night temperature of minus 8 degrees Celsius or less, the Met official said.

Such is the cold that *shikara-walas* are facing a tough time rowing their boats in the frozen waters of the Dal Lake. The men have to break the sheet of ice formed on the surface to make way for their boats.

People are using hot water, firewood and blue light gas to defrost pipelines for getting water in their households. However, many are complaining that pipes and taps remain blocked despite using every possible means. Water is being brought from far-off places in many areas, especially out of the main city, as a result of the blocked pipelines due to the extreme cold.

Javed Ahmad, a resident of uptown Srinagar, claimed authorities are not helping locals in clearing the frozen pipes and taps. "They are just busy promoting their non-existent 'good work' on social networking sites," he fumed.



BHOPAL DIARY

ANURAAG SINGH
Our correspondent in Madhya Pradesh
singhanuraag.journo@gmail.com

Bungalow for Jyotiraditya Scindia finally in Bhopal

After a wait of almost three years, BJP Rajya Sabha member Jyotiraditya Scindia has finally been allotted government bungalow in Bhopal's posh Shyamala Hills area. Importantly, Scindia will have among his neighbours two former CMs, including Uma Bharti and his bête noire and present Congress Rajya Sabha member Digvijaya Singh. Scindia had vacated his official bungalow in Delhi in July 2019, after losing the Lok Sabha polls from pocket-borough Guna seat. But within nine months of joining the BJP and scripting the collapse of Kamal Nath, Scindia has finally been allotted a bungalow in Bhopal which is reportedly bigger than those of the two ex-CMs.

Tehsildar in trouble for not responding to minister

The top two leaders in the BJP government in Madhya Pradesh seem to be matching in each other in making aggressive posturing in public. While Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has announced to "bury" mafias 10 feet deep and hanging non-performing officials, the number two in his government — home minister Narottam Mishra — too has not stopped back from taking strong actions in certain cases. The latest incident happened in Mishra's native Datia district on Sunday, where he announced the suspension of local tehsildar at a public programme to distribute eligibility slips of government scheme. The revenue department official's fault was that he failed to appear despite being called thrice by the home minister.

Class X top ranker turns MLA for a day

Sumit Asati, who was among the top rankers in MP Board of Secondary Examinations 2018 Class X examination, turned MLA for a day in Chhatarpur district recently. The development happened in line with BJP MLA Pradyuman Singh Lodhi's Republic Day announcement of making top ranker students MLA for a day in the future. On January 29, Sumit boarded the official vehicle of the MLA and attended various public functions in the district as legislator. The teenager also inaugurated an eight-day cricket tournament as chief guest in presence of Lodhi.

Row after cop touches feet of BJP state chief

Khaki touched the feet of Khadi in power in Ujjain on Saturday evening. In an embarrassment to the Madhya Pradesh Police, a video of inspector in-charge Ujjain's Madhav Nagar police station Dinesh Prajapati in full uniform touching the feet of Khajuraho Lok Sabha member VD Sharma went viral on social media since Sunday morning. The incident took place when Sharma, who is also the BJP state president, had stepped out of his car. Sharing the video on Twitter, Congress leader KK Mishra questioned what can the people expect from such police inspector who is at the feet of the state BJP president particularly when the politician is not even looking at him.

Palestinian
accused of plotting terror attacks in West Bank shot dead by Israeli troops on Sunday

GLOBAL WEATHER
LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	3	-9	SNY	Los Angeles	21	9	SNY
Colombo	30	24	LR	Melbourne	24	14	LC
Dhaka	23	13	SNY	Moscow	-18	-19	LC
Dubai	24	15	SNY	New York	2	1	LC
Houston	17	6	LC	Singapore	30	24	LR
Istanbul	16	11	LC	Toronto	1	-2	LC
London	6	3	LC	Washington	3	0	LC

An Afghan security force personnel holds a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) near the site of a car bomb attack in Sherzad district of Nangarhar Province | AFP

Foreign troops may stay in Af beyond May: Report

Could complicate peace process between Afghan govt and Taliban

KATHMANDU

FOREIGN troops intend to stay in Afghanistan beyond the May deadline stipulated by the US's agreement with the Taliban, four senior NATO sources told Reuters.

"There will be no full withdrawal by allies by April-end. Conditions have not been fulfilled," a source told the British news agency.

Also, the administration of US President Joe Biden is aiming for a "more calculated exit strategy" unlike his predecessor Donald Trump.

"And with the new US administration, there will be tweaks in the policy, the sense of hasty withdrawal which was prevalent will be addressed and we could see a much more calculated exit strategy," the source said. More clarity on foreign troop presence in the war-torn country beyond May is likely to emerge during the next month's NATO summit.

The Pentagon said last week that the Taliban's refusal to meet commitments to reduce violence in Afghanistan is raising questions about whether all US troops will be able to leave by May as required under the peace deal.

Following discussions in Moscow on Friday, the head of the Taliban delegation, Sher Mohammed Abbas Stanikzai, said the group expects the US to fulfill its pledge to withdraw all of its troops from Afghanistan by end of May.

The US Pentagon announced in mid-January that the US military has met its goal of reducing the number of troops in Afghanistan to about 2,500.

However, violence has escalated sharply across Afghanistan, with the Taliban refusing to make concessions.

Meanwhile, the Afghan peace negotiating team praised President Biden's administration for its decision to review the US-Taliban peace agreement, saying the deal favours the Taliban.

A member of the Afghan government's peace negotiating team on Sunday warned the Taliban that if they don't resume peace talks in Qatar soon, the government could recall the team before a deal is reached.

Government negotiator Rasul Talib said in a news conference the team is waiting for the return of the Taliban leadership to Doha, where a second round of peace talks began this month but have made little progress.

He asked the Taliban to "stop spreading baseless remarks" and return to the negotiating table, adding "The Taliban does not have the guts for peace, they are spreading nonsense around." *Agencies*

Two civilians killed in Taliban shelling

The Taliban on Sunday fired two mortars in northern Faryab province killing two civilians and wounding 14 others, said the provincial police spokesman, Karim Yuresh. He said Afghan security checkpoints were targeted but the shells missed the checkpoints and hit the civilians. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid denied the group fired mortars toward civilians and accused Afghan forces of firing the mortars and causing the casualties. A suicide bomber drove a vehicle loaded with explosives into a base for Afghan defence forces in the country's east on Saturday, killing at least eight security personnel in an attack claimed by the Taliban.

UK seeks to join free trade bloc in Asia

LONDON

BRITAIN said it is to apply to join a massive 11-nation free-trade bloc of Asia-Pacific countries this week, not long after quitting the European Union's single market.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss (pic) will formally request Monday for Britain to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), a market representing half a billion people and roughly 13.5 per cent of the global economy.

The move comes a year after Britain left the European Union, ending more than forty years of membership, and after five years of complex trade discussions with the bloc.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the potential new partnership would "bring enormous economic benefits for the people of Britain".

"Applying to be the first new country to join the CPTPP demonstrates our ambition to do business on the best terms with our friends and partners all over the world and be an enthusiastic champion of global free trade," he said.

Negotiations between the UK and the partnership—which represents 11 Pacific Rim nations including Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Mexico and Vietnam—are expected to start this year, the trade department said. But opposition Labour party questioned the lack of transparency surrounding the pact. After five years of debate over Brexit trade agreements, she said people would question the British government's decision "to rush into joining another one on the other side of the world." *AFP*

ASIA MATTERS

PAKISTAN

Bin Laden financed Nawaz Sharif: Diplomat

Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden had supported and funded ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif, a former Pakistani diplomat who also served as a minister in the PML-N supremo's cabinet has alleged. "Yes, he (Osama) supported Mian Nawaz Sharif at one time. However, that is a complicated story. He (Osama) used to extend financial assistance (to Sharif)," Pakistan's former envoy to the United States Abida Hussain claimed this during an interview to a private news channel, *Geo TV* reported. Hussain, 73, also an ex-cabinet member of the Sharif government, recalled that at one time bin Laden was popular and liked by everyone including the Americans but at a later stage, he was treated as a stranger, the channel said. She was apparently referring to the Soviet-Afghan War in 1980s during which bin Laden was fighting against the Soviets

THAILAND

Govt critic ordered to remove FB post on vaccine supply

A court in Thailand has ordered a prominent critic of the Thai government to remove his posts on social media claiming that the country's vaccine policy is opaque a favours a company owned by the king. A video that Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit uploaded on Facebook criticised Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha's government for allowing Siam Bioscience to manufacture and distribute AstraZeneca's Covid vaccine, despite its lack of experience in the field of inoculation. Siam Bioscience had received a $10 million grant from the Thai government recently to ramp up its infrastructure

VIETNAM

Communist Party reelects chief to lead the nation

Vietnam's Communist Party on Sunday reelected Nguyen Phu Trong to be its chief, the state Vietnam News Agency reported. His selection makes him the nation's de facto leader for a third five-year term. The vote at the 13th National Party Congress in Hanoi took place a day earlier than planned, as the meeting, scheduled to end on Tuesday, was being shortened to lessen the threat from a coronavirus outbreak, which last week spread to the capital city. Vietnam is a single-party Communist state, so party leaders almost automatically assume leadership of the government, though debates can take place within the party's bodies and the legislature. The newly elected 200-member Central Committee picked Trong as head of the Politburo

Amid US pressure, Pak govt to join review of Pearl murder acquittal

ISLAMABAD

UNDER pressure from the US and the UN, the Pakistan government has said it would formally join the review proceedings initiated by the Sindh administration against the Supreme Court's acquittal of British-born al-Qaeda terrorist Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and his three aides in the brutal murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl.

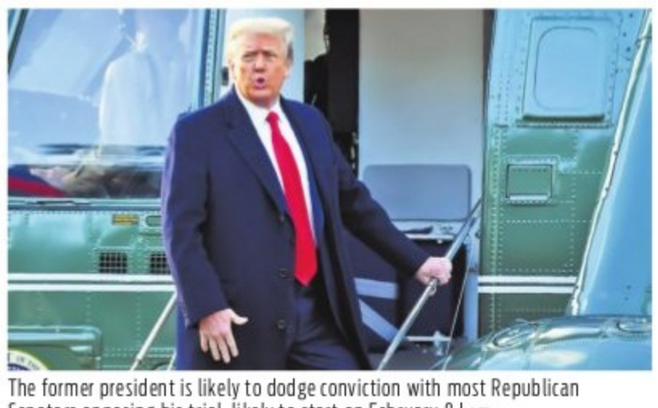
Pearl, the 38-year-old South Asia bureau chief for *The Wall Street Journal*, was abducted and beheaded while he was in Pakistan investigating a story in 2002 on the links between the country's powerful spy agency ISI and al-Qaeda.

The Supreme Court on Thursday ordered the release of main accused Sheikh and his aides—Fahad Naseem, Sheikh Adil and Salman Saqib—by dismissing appeals against their acquittal by the Sindh High Court. The judgement was denounced by Pearl's family as "a complete travesty of justice".

The Sindh government on Friday filed a review petition in the apex court against the acquittal of Sheikh and his three accomplices.

A spokesman of the Attorney General of Pakistan on Saturday announced that the federal government will file an appropriate application before the apex court to be allowed to join as a party in the proceedings and further seek review and recall of the court's January 28 judgement. The federal government will file an application for the constitution of a larger bench to hear the review petitions. In cooperation with the provincial government, the federal government will continue to take all legal steps to bring the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice in accordance with the law, the spokesman said.

The announcement came after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke to Pakistan Foreign Minister over phone and discussed the accountability of convicted terrorists responsible for Pearl's murder. Blinken also expressed "deep concern" over the apex court's judgement. *PTI*



The former president is likely to dodge conviction with most Republican Senators opposing his trial, likely to start on February 8 | AFP

Don's lead lawyers ditch him ahead of trial in US Senate

WASHINGTON

SEVERAL of former US president Donald Trump's impeachment lawyers have left his team a little over a week before his trial, US media reported on Saturday.

CNN cited unnamed sources as saying that five lawyers —including two who were thought to be leading the team —had parted ways with the Republican billionaire after disagreeing over his legal strategy.

Trump had wanted the lawyers to continue his baseless claims of mass election fraud rather than focus on the legality of convicting a president after he has left office, CNN said, adding that he was "not receptive" to discussion.

The lawyers included Butch Bowers and Deborah Barbier, expected to lead Trump's defence, CNN and other outlets reported, saying it had been a "mutual decision."

"We have done much work, but have not made a final decision on our legal team, which will be made shortly," tweeted Trump advisor Jason Miller in response to the reports.

The development leaves Trump, who has reportedly been struggling to form a defense ahead of his historic second impeachment trial over the ransacking of the US Capitol this month, facing new hurdles with just days to go. However, even with his legal team in chaos he looks increasingly likely to dodge conviction.

Nearly all senators from his party have signaled opposition to his trial.

The trial—in which Trump faces a charge of "incitement of insurrection"—will begin on February 9.

But with just five Republicans joining all 50 Democrats this week in agreeing that the trial should go forward, it appears unlikely that 17 Republicans would vote against Trump, the minimum number needed to reach the two-thirds threshold for conviction. *AFP*

MASSIVE ANTI-PUTIN RALLIES ROCK RUSSIA

MOSCOW

POLICE detained more than 4,000 people across Russia on Sunday amid a massive clampdown on protests demanding the release of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

Thousands of protesters defied government warnings to rally from Vladivostok to Saint Petersburg in a second weekend of mass demonstrations over the arrest of President Vladimir Putin's most prominent critic.

Navalny was detained at a Moscow airport in mid-January after flying back to Russia from Germany where he was recovering from an August poisoning he blames on the Kremlin. Protesters who had hoped to gather outside the headquarters of the FSB security service were instead scattered to various parts of the city as organisers made last-minute changes in locations.

Journalists reported seeing dozens of protesters detained and taken into police vans. It was unclear amid the chaos how many people took part in the demonstration.

Independent monitor OVD-Info said at least 4,100 people had been detained across the country, including 1,162 in Moscow, and arrests were continuing. It reported more than 4,000 detentions during similar protests last Saturday.

The Russian Union of Journalists said around 35 people working for media outlets were also detained on Sunday.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Twitter condemned "the persistent use of harsh tactics against peaceful protesters and journalists by Russian authorities for a second week straight."

The Russian foreign ministry hit back, accusing the United States of "gross interference" in its affairs and of using "online platforms controlled by Washington" to promote the protests.

Local politician and Navalny ally Helga Pirogova told AFP that Sunday's protest in Novosibirsk was potentially bigger than the week before. "People are still outraged," the 32-year-old said.

Russian authorities issued several warnings against participating in the unauthorised rallies and threatened criminal charges against protesters.

OVER 4,000 DETAINED

Sunday's protests kicked off in the country's far east city of **Vladivostok** where police blocked protesters from reaching the city center. Video footage showed hundreds chanting "Putin is a thief". At least 120 people were detained

Over 1,100 people were detained in Moscow, including Navalny's wife, Yulia, who joined the protest. In a rare move, **Moscow** city authorities also closed several central Metro stations and diverted overground transport. Hundreds of police in riot gear lined the streets of the capital from the early hours of Sunday morning, restricting movements of pedestrians around the centre

The city of **Novosibirsk** in eastern Siberia saw one of the biggest rallies, with several thousand people marching across the city. Over 100 protesters were detained

An estimated 2,000 marched across Russia's second-largest city of **St Petersburg**, and occasional scuffles erupted as some demonstrators pushed back police who tried to make detentions. Nearly 900 were arrested. Police had closed off the main thoroughfare Nevsky Prospekt. Metro stations were also closed

Police detain a man during a rally in support of jailed opposition leader Alexei Navalny in Saint Petersburg | AFP

UK opens new visa scheme for Hong Kongers

LONDON

A new visa route that offers Hong Kong residents the option to apply to come to the UK and become citizens through a fast-track system officially opened on Sunday.

Around 3,00,000 Hong Kong nationals are expected to apply for the visa, which is open to holders of the British National (Overseas) passport and their immediate dependents and was announced last year in retaliation of China's controversial new National Security Law.

The UK maintains the new law is a "clear and serious breach" of the Sino-British Joint Declaration under which Hong Kong had been handed over to the Chinese authorities over 23 years ago.

China has reacted with fury to the visa offer, announcing that it would no longer recognise the passports as a legitimate travel or ID document.

The move was largely symbolic as Hong Kongers tend to use their own passports or ID cards to leave the city. *AFP*

US sees rise in pilot errors, 'rusty' crews blame Covid lockdown

WASHINGTON

THE United States has seen a substantial increase in pilot errors in recent months that are blamed on "rusty" pilots returning to work after the Covid-19 lockdown.

Dozens of pilots have confessed to NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting System that they have made numerous mistakes since returning to work since the lockdown eased in May, *Daily Mail* reported.

Thankfully, the reported errors—including forgetting to disengage the parking brake on take-off and choosing the wrong runway—have not led to any major accidents.

"Because I had not flown in a few months, I was rusty. I felt that my recollection was strong enough, but in reality, I should have taken some time to review' the standard operating procedures," a pilot, who forgot to activate his plane's deicing system, told the NASA watchdog. The de-icing prevents the altitude and airspeed sensors from freezing.

Errors are normal when pilots have been off duty for long, experts say | AFP

The errors have caught the eyes of the regulators too. There has been an increase in the rate of planes making 'unstable approaches' while attempting to land, according to the International Air Transport Association. They occur when pilots try to land at a higher than normal speed or without enough thrust

Aviation experts have expressed concerns over pilots returning to work after a prolonged break.

"The key to flying safely is frequency," Richard G McSpadden Jr, senior vice president at the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association's Air Safety Institute told LA Times. "You are not as sharp if you haven't flown for a while."

The pandemic caused a 75% dip in US flight traffic during April and May. Many pilots are yet to return to work.

₹3,972 cr investment made by mutual funds in such units of emerging investment instrument REIT in 2020, marking a six-fold jump from preceding year

RAJAS KELKAR

WHY FASTER GROWTH MATTERS TO YOUR FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

With the government aiming to stimulate growth, your investments are likely to trickle into the stock markets sooner than later

BY the time you read this, you would have been overwhelmed by words like 'growth', 'fiscal deficit' and 'reforms'. You will hear more on that in the next few hours as Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman rises to present the Union Budget.

She will say a lot and promise a lot. If you want to know the government's thinking, you need to read the Economic Survey published last Friday. It is a document that underscores the importance of economic growth to pull India out of the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. The word 'growth' appears 888 times in the two-part 961-page survey.

Economic Surveys are usually tabled a day ahead of the Union Budget. However, this year, a lot of exceptions are being made. The survey is a review of the year gone by. It is advice to the government by the economic think-tank. The chief economic advisor to the government is usually the author of the survey.

Dr K V Subramanian, the chief economic advisor, begins by lauding the government effort to minimise life losses in a worst-case scenario amidst high uncertainty. The references to growth highlight the fact that it is the need of a country of India's size. The survey clearly states that India must focus on economic growth to lift the poor out of poverty. Redistribution of wealth is possible in an emerging economy only if the economic pie grows. You cannot just take money from the rich or borrow to pay for the poor. There has to be a steady growth in the economy for everyone to benefit.

That line of thought is important for your finances too. If the government concentrates on economic growth, your money will see a steady growth over the years. Businesses rely on economic growth for expansion. The year 2020 has disrupted everything. However, the faster the country gets back on the growth path, the better. The survey finds that India is getting around. In 2021-22, it is likely to grow at above 11 per cent, the survey predicts. It is the fastest growth in decades.

Infrastructure

A lynchpin to India's growth is the way the government allocates resources. The word 'infrastructure' appears 260 times in the Economic Survey. The survey highlights the importance of the infrastructure pipeline that the government is planning to execute over the next five years. That could trigger new income opportunities for many people looking to earn more or seek employment.

When the finance minister rises to speak, you need to watch out for things she says on how the government proposes to spend money. You may want to watch out for an excellent allocation to create new assets like roads, rails, airports or bridges, education, healthcare and sanitation that would work well for financial markets.

Reforms

On a very encouraging note, the Economic Survey mentions the word 'reform' 178 times. An essential part of reforms is disinvestment. Pundits have spoken and talked of the government's need to divest ownership in public sector companies to raise non-tax revenue. The government in India has been historically unwilling to do so. However, other reforms are essential to enhance the efficiency and productivity of assets owned by the government and the private sector.

TAPAS RANJAN

The survey devotes an entire chapter to the issue of process reforms. Words like 'regulation' and 'over-regulation' find several mentions in the survey. The key is the emphasis of the economic think-tank on the 'over-regulation' bit. The survey is critical about the effectiveness of law enforcement in India.

The survey quotes findings from the 'World Rule of Law Index' that provides a cross-country comparison of regulatory enforcement. India's overall rank is 45 out of 128 countries. However, when it comes to regulatory enforcement, it ranks a low 104.

What it means to your money

Economic Surveys are like advisory notes to the government. Usually, political compulsions determine the course of the Union Budget and the allocation of capital. You may get a minor tax relief here and there. However, keeping high hopes may not help as the government faces revenue challenges. We are in an environment where RBI would keep interest rates low for some time to come. As such, your bank and fixed deposits are not going to help you fight inflation.

The government concentrates on stimulating economic growth. You could see your savings channelised into stock markets grow steadily. You may want to review your asset allocation with your financial advisor based on your life goals after the budget.

(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

MONEY-WISE

EXCUSES HOLD YOU BACK FROM CUSHY RETIREMENT PLAN

IN the course of the last three decades of investment behaviour that I have seen...let me tell you some of the lies that I have heard....

- I am too young to start investing for retirement Younger people do not like to hear about saving/investing for their retirement – it is just too far away. My take: forget retirement, this generation will need money to eat from when they are between jobs. Job loss can happen at 32, while retirement may happen at 60.
- I have no money to save or investI have heard this from people earning ₹9,000 per month as well as from people taking home ₹1,34,000 per month. Need I say more?
- I have so much debt, how can I invest Well, assuming you have debt at 10% p.a. interest and a decent Index return of 13%p.a., it makes more sense to keep investing while repaying the loan. Do not give up one for the other.
- Sir I am in the defence forces, my provident fund and pension will take care of my needs. It does not matter if I lose some money in Endowment plans – ULIP or otherwise, said one senior person.
- One of the senior defence personnel (now retired perhaps) said: "The older people may be bad, but the youngsters of today in the army know everything about investing". He gave examples of how all of them had e-brokerage accounts and they had attended a four-day session on technical trading.
- "Sir you talk too much about saving and investing... We are middle class and not in the greedy rich class... We do not need to worry so much about saving and investing," said a woman, who was sure that ₹80 lakh would be available to her at her retirement, and was not worried about how long it would last.
- I do not understand anything about markets. I need to know how the markets work and then I will start investing. Humorous? Well, true.
- "I am a doctor (any profession would do) and I will never retire, so I do not see any need to save/ invest..."
- It is too late Sir! I am 48 years old and I think it is too late. This is the opposite of "I am so young..."' My take: start; better late than never. If you live till 92, you still have 44 years to go!

FINANCIAL ADVICE

PV SUBRAMANYAM

writes at www.subramoney.com and has authored the best seller 'Retire Rich - Invest ₹ 40 a day'

The fact that many Indians are not saving enough for retirement is downright scary. Not getting enough exposure to equity is even scarier. Without proper government services in place, a vast majority of these people will be forced to subsist on children, government hospitals, relatives or...??? If you do not want to be one of them, now is the time to get real about investing for the future.

You may think you cannot afford to save for retirement, but you cannot really afford not to!

You might think it's too 'hard' or 'complex', but once you find a half-decent IFA and decide to stick to some basic plan, investing is easy and investments are so simple a class 7 child could understand.

The amazing excuses for people not investing their money abound, but you would be wise to ignore them. Excuses would not help you get ahead; they can only hold you back from the retirement you deserve.

ENCRYPTED RETURN

Investors wait for Budget to unveil future of Bitcoin

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

ON Friday, when Tesla CEO Elon Musk simply wrote #Bitcoin on his Twitter Bio, the cryptocurrency soared 14 per cent to touch a two-week high of $36,901 (roughly ₹26.9 lakh) value. When the world's richest man says it, people listen!

Musk's 43.8 million followers, including many Indians, went into a crypto frenzy, debating whether the investments in digital currencies are back on track. After rallying 300 per cent last year, when people compared Bitcoin with traditional favourite asset gold, January saw its value decline to below $30,000 until Musk's declaration of love for crypto. Last month, he even hinted at converting some part of Tesla's transactions into digital currency.

Back in India, Bitcoin fans are now not as upbeat, especially because the government may soon be banning all the private digital currencies. A Bill will be reportedly tabled in Parliament during the Budget session aiming to introduce an official digital currency through the Reserve Bank of India.

The new law will also make certain exceptions pertaining to the technology which is crucial to cryptocurrency. Ever since the Supreme Court overturned the 2018 RBI-imposed ban on cryptocurrencies in March 2020, investors as well as the crypto exchanges in India have been throwing their weight behind it by pouring money into digital assets. The Indian banks had also started allowing investors/ traders to trade on the platforms using their bank accounts which resulted in a huge surge in digital asset owners.

However, now, the investors are advising wait-and watch policy for clarity in the regulatory environment. "We have heard that the Bill is most likely to be passed in Parliament soon. This will result in an unprecedented sale of Bitcoins at exchanges. In India, a trend seen on the exchanges is holding Bitcoins for medium term (3-5 years) in wallets much like any other asset. However, we are most likely going to see a surge in trading and sale of cryptocurrencies," Manjunath Shetty, a retail investor and an engineer said.

Why mull a ban

Governments around the world have been looking into ways to regulate cryptocurrencies but no major economy has taken the drastic step of placing a blanket ban on owning them, even though concern has been raised about the misuse of consumer data and its possible impact on the financial system

The change in regulations in India have come at a time when the global investment majors as well as businesses have placed their bets on Bitcoin for the long term and eventually taking the crown off gold as the choice asset.

"Indian investors are usually averse to high-risk trading, which crypto currency is. However, the millennial and the educated class have shown interest in Bitcoin lately. It may be sometime before we see a huge sale of Bitcoins on exchanges in India," Shetty added.

IRDAI sets the standardisation ball rolling with new Saral Pension Plan

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
@ New Delhi

TAKING forward the plan to standardise insurance products, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has directed insurance companies to offer Saral Pension Plan (SPP) from April 1.

While there is already a National Pension Scheme (NPS), the SPP would differ from it insofar as offering a standard individual immediate annuity product, with the option of single-life and joint-life annuities, is concerned. The NPS suits people with a sizeable number of years left in service, while the SPP will attract people desiring a steady income with fewer years left in service.

Under the single-life annuity option, the annuity is paid for life of the annuitant. Besides, 100 per cent purchase price will be returned to the nominee or the legal heirs on the annuitant's death.

In case of joint-life annuity, annuity can be provided to the secondary annuitant on the death of the primary annuitant and a return of 100 per cent purchase price on death of the last survivor.

To simplify, if you pay a lumpsum as purchase price, you get a fixed payment at regular intervals for the rest of your life. For example, you might pay ₹1 lakh upfront, you receive ₹3,000 per year as income for life.

Mode of annuity payment will be monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and yearly. The plan will provide a minimum annuity of ₹1,000 per month, ₹3,000 per quarter, ₹6,000 per half year and ₹12,000 per annum.

Also, there is no limit for maximum annuity, as this will depend on the maximum purchase price. Apart from this, one can also take loan against the annuity on the condition that the effective annual interest amount payable on loan does not exceed 50 per cent of the annuity.

"Such a standard product will make it easier for the customers to make an informed choice, enhance the trust between insurers and the insured, and reduce mis-selling as well as potential disputes," the insurance regulator said.

Welcoming the product as a good offering bereft of complications, Rajesh Malhotra, a personal finance advisor, said: "The provision of obtaining loan is very attractive. This is certainly a good option for people with fewer years left in service."

TODAY'S STOCK PICK

TITAN

Current Price ₹1,420

Opening ₹1,456

TITAN's end-of-quarter update, indicating 15% growth in Jewelry in 3QFY21, reflects a strong rebound in consumer sentiment. Despite elevated gold prices, the surge in demand demonstrates resilience. The recovery in the 'Watches and Wearables' and 'Eyewear' segments at 88% and 92%, respectively, are also above expectations. TITAN's medium- to long-term earnings growth opportunity is best-of-breed

— Motilal Oswal Securities Limited

Disclaimer: The views and recommendations made above are that of the individual analyst or broking company, and not that of *The New Indian Express*.

EXPRESS READ

Top-10's valuation down by ₹3L-crore

Mumbai: The combined market valuation of nine of the top 10 valued domestic companies eroded by a whopping ₹3,96,629.40 crore last week in tandem with a weak broader market, where Reliance Industries Limited took the biggest hit. In the last week, the 30-share BSE benchmark tumbled 2,592.77 points or 5.30 per cent due to profit-booking ahead of the Union Budget. Only ICICI Bank managed to witness addition in its valuation in the holiday-truncated last week. PTI

At 3.7%, insurance penetration a cause for concern

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU

DESPITE making improvements in the last two decades, the performance of the insurance sector is still way below than in other Asian economies. This was revealed by the recently-released Economic Survey. Two key indicators – Insurance Penetration and Insurance Density – used to assess the performance and potential of the insurance peg India's growth much below Malaysia, Thailand, and China.

According to the survey, insurance penetration in India increased to 3.76 per cent in 2019 from the 2.71 per cent in 2001. However, it was much lower than Malaysia, Thailand, and China's, which clocked 4.72, 4.99 and 4.30 per cent, respectively in 2019.

Insurance density too has risen in the country, from $11.5 in 2001 to approximately $78 in 2019. However, here, too, it pales in comparison to Malaysia, Thailand, and China's 2019 figures of $536, $389, and $430, respectively. Insurance penetration is calculated as the percentage of insurance premium to GDP, while insurance density is the ratio of insurance premium to population.

As of 2019, the penetration of life insurance in India was at 2.82, while non-life insurance's was further lower at 0.94 per cent in comparison to the global life insurance penetration of 3.35 per cent and non-life segment's 3.88 per cent in 2019.

The survey said that the government-funded Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) has improved health insurance coverage, noting that the proportion of households with health insurance increased by 54 per cent for the states that implemented PM-JAY while falling by 10 per cent where it was not. PM-JAY provides ₹5 lakh medical insurance coverage per year to over 10.7 crore families identified as per the Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011, said the survey.

PM-JAY implementation key to increased coverage

Proportion of households that had health insurance rose by 89 per cent in Bihar, Assam and Sikkim between 2015 and 2019. The figure slumped by 12 per cent in West Bengal in the same period

STANDARD DEDUCTION

Pandemic-battered salaried class to get some cushion now

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
@ New Delhi

WHAT's in it for me would be the prominent question racking the brains of many when Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presents the Union Budget on Monday. Be that as it may, the salaried class battered by the pandemic is likely to get some relief this year, with major changes in tax slabs being ruled out and experts hinting at some relief in terms of increased limit of standard deduction.

"The Budget may hike the standard deduction limit to boost consumption. This will give some relief to the salaried class," a senior official from the Finance Ministry had told TNIE last week.

Introduced in the 2018-19 Budget, the standard deduction replaced the medical and transport allowance up to Rs 50,000. However, industries have been demanding a further hike in standard deduction ever since.

In her last year's Budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had introduced a new income tax regime under which there is zero tax on income up to ₹2.5 lakh; income between ₹2.5 lakh and ₹5 lakh attract a five per cent levy, which is 10 per cent on income between ₹5 lakh and ₹7.5 lakh; income between ₹7.5 lakh and ₹10 lakh are charged 15 per cent while the slab is at 20 per cent for income between ₹10 lakh and ₹12.5 lakh; the slab rises to 25 per cent for income between ₹12.5 lakh and ₹15 lakh, beyond which the levy is 30 per cent.

These rates were available to people, who were ready to forego some exemptions in the earlier tax slabs. The budget gave the people the option to migrate to the new regime or stay with the older system.

When calculations hinted that the previous regime was more attractive, people opted out of the migration.

However, sources say the Finance Ministry is likely to introduce some more deductions in the new slab to make it more attractive based on the market feedback.

Gill clinches title at Rally of Coimbatore

Gaurav Gill was in blazing form at the wheels of his Mahindra XUV as he and navigator Musa Sherif showed immense skills and patience to win the Rally of Coimbatore here on Sunday and again emerge national champions. By winning two legs on tarmac in Itanagar last month and performing strongly in Kethanur, Gill showed he was the king of gravel as well.

IN FULL SWING

Anderson's friend & coach recall how the Lancashire man harnessed his raw talent to become a potent bowler

VENKATA KRISHNA B @Chennai

JAMES Anderson's early years in Burnely weren't as eventful as his career is now. Every now and then as his friends found time to play cricket in the summer, Anderson didn't come across as anything special. His friends recall others being more talented, than "Jimmy" who with a physique made to pursue any sport was inclined to football, before cricket took over.

As India prepare to face England in the first Test in Chennai amid talks of a green wicket on offer, the homework for their batsmen will begin with Anderson. At 38, he isn't showing signs of slowing down. His mastery only keeps growing as he showed in Galle, becoming the oldest pacer to claim six-wickets in an innings in the sub-continent. As 30s arrive, most pacers begin to make adjustments. Pace is compromised, which is true in the case of Anderson too, but his skillset — swing — remains as potent as ever.

Michael Brown, Anderson's friend since childhood, says it is a testament to the city he grew up in, which was dominated by working-class folks. Day-in and day-out, you tend to repeat what you are good at to make a living. Only thing is Anderson did by swinging the ball both ways. Brown was among the earliest to get a taste of Anderson's outswingers, the only thing he holds against his dear friend. "James was a late bloomer, and he would be the first one to admit it. It is only by 17, 18 that he concentrated solely on cricket. That's when we realised he was too good to just play League cricket in Lancashire. It was just a question of whether he could refine that rawness and learn some additional skills and stay fit," Brown told this daily.

Since turning 35, Anderson has been repeatedly asked how long can he keep going, but each year he has only went past new milestones. He begins India series just 13 wickets behind Anil Kumble, third-highest Test wicket-taker (619) in the world. It is a question that even many back home in Burnely keep mentioning when Anderson comes down, but Brown says milestones have hardly mattered to the father of two girls.

"For James, it is more about competition and love of playing the game. He hasn't given any impression to stop playing. For someone who played first class cricket, James has my respect not for the milestones, but to keep doing these drills every day for such a long time. It is hard mentally, you get bored, but he keeps working hard whilst travelling and away from his family," Brown said.

It was his mother who dialled up Lancashire to have Anderson included in trials. Even as you begin the topic, Brown interrupts. "Maybe, he got a chance six months earlier, but a talent like him was never going to be missed. He always had the capability to bowl jaffa to good batsmen. From League cricket to bowling in Cape Town in 2003 World Cup, he had rapid ascendance."

When Anderson isn't playing scricket, he drives to Burnley from Manchester to catch up with friends for a round of golf. Until a few years back when Brown was the chairman of Burnley Cricket Club, Anderson was a regular at their dinner events, giving away his kits to kids, and even playing in fund-raiser matches. "Even now, he plays golf regularly with my brother and dad. We have an event annually where Anderson's close friends play against Stuart Broad's team from Nottinghamshire. We play and like normal guys have a few drinks and head home."

Despite having pace and swing, Anderson's career with England hasn't been all rosy. Stress fractures are fast bowlers' worst enemy and Anderson wasn't an exception. After making it to the England side, he suffered a career-threatening injury, which sidelined him for months. Anderson would then fall back on England's then bowling coach Kevin Shine and Mike Watkinson at Lancashire county to remodel his action.

"When he came in, he was just a young quick bowler, who was not particularly consistent, but had the ability to swing the ball at pace. It took him little bit of time to develop his skills and consistency to become what he is today," said Watkinson.

These days Anderson is one of the all-time greats. One who knows how to put pressure on batsmen by bowling maidens. "He went from this raw fast bowler to somebody who acquired the skills of swing. To be able to trust the ball was going to swing when he wanted rather than some swinging and not, helped his accuracy."

As he refined his skillset, Anderson ended up changing his action a bit, which eventually led to stress fracture. Watkinson recalls the toughness Anderson showed back then. "He took it as a positive and wanted to refine his action. He decided that he wanted to recapture some of his action from the younger days."

(top) James Anderson with teammates at Burnley CC. (R) With friends Michael & David Brown | SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

IMPACT PLAYER: JAMES ANDERSON

One of the most experienced bowlers in the visiting England contingent, Anderson has toured India four times before. The 38-year-old has scalped 66 in Asia at an average of 29. The only pacer with 600+ wickets, he recently picked up a six-wicket haul during the second Test against Sri Lanka in Galle last week. His ability to excel with new ball makes him a threat for the Indian team.

IN TESTS
M: 157, W: 606, Avg: 26.6
IN INDIA
M: 10, W: 26, Avg: 33.46

TNCA wants fans for second Test, approaches BCCI

VENKATA KRISHNA B @Chennai

A DAY after the Central government allowed stadiums to return to full capacity across the country for outdoor events, the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) has approached the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to permit fans for the second Test between India and England starting on February 13. The first Test which begins at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on February 5 will continue to be played behind closed doors as communicated by the BCCI to TNCA earlier.

On Saturday, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) issued fresh guidelines stating that stadiums hosting outdoor events can operate to their full capacity. In fact, as early as December, the MYAS had allowed stadiums to operate at 50 per cent capacity, subject to clearance from the respective state government. As soon as the Tamil Nadu government opened the cinema halls to operate at 50 per cent capacity, the TNCA had even checked with local authorities about bringing fans for India's two Tests against England in Chennai.

However, the BCCI chose to be cautious. After consultation with England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), it told TNCA that the Tests will be played behind closed doors. But the new guidelines issued on Saturday has made TNCA hopeful. With just four days to go for the first Test, TNCA has ruled out the possibility of hosting the first match in front of fans. On Sunday, the host association established contact with the BCCI with regards to allowing fans for the second Test.

"There is no change to the first Test. But we have got in touch with the BCCI requesting them to allow fans for the second Test as there is enough time. Since the government has allowed it, there shouldn't be an issue and we can conduct the Tests under a safe environment with all protocols in place," a TNCA official told this newspaper.

A decision in this regard is expected in the next couple of days as ticketing arrangements have to be made. If fans are to be allowed, they have to be monitored by CCTV cameras especially at entry and exit gates to prevent overcrowding. That shouldn't be an issue at Chepauk as it is amongst the most spectator-friendly venues.

The TNCA is hopeful they will be allowed to operate at 50 per cent at least for the second Test. With regards to the BCCI, it needs to know how the ECB is placed in bringing fans back to the stadium. There are concerns that England are not keen on playing in front of fans, as they have been very cautious in their approach.

Tamil Nadu claim T20 trophy after 14 years

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

FOURTEEN years after winning the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy in the inaugural edition, Tamil Nadu laid hands on it again on Sunday as they defeated Baroda by seven wickets and two overs to spare in a lop-sided final at the Sardar Patel Stadium in Ahmedabad. After an impressive bowling performance led by left-arm spinner Manimaran Siddharth, which restricted Baroda to 120/9, the batsmen ensured Tamil Nadu lift the trophy this time after losing final to Karnataka last season.

TN spinner M Siddharth starred with four wickets against Baroda | BCCI

Tamil Nadu entered the summit clash as the favourites and they showed why. On a tiring track that was taking turn, Tamil Nadu included Siddharth in place of pacer Aswin Crist and the move worked wonders. After Baba Aparajith provided an early breakthrough, Siddharth took care of the top-order after being introduced in the fourth over.

Baroda's big hope with the bat was captain Kedar Devdhar, but once he fell, the rest just crumbled under pressure. Baroda found it difficult to get boundaries as Dinesh Karthik held back the pacers till the 14th over as Sai Kishore, Murugan Ashwin were rotated before Sonu Yadav and M Mohammed came on.

Though Baroda recovered through Vishnu Solanki (49), their total of 120 meant onus was on the bowlers to get early breakthroughs. Though N Jagadeesan departed in the fourth over, Tamil Nadu kept their nerve as efforts from Hari Nishanth, Aparajith, Karthik and Shahrukh Khan took them home.

Brief scores: Baroda 120/9 in 20 ovs (Solanki 49; Siddharth 4/20) **lost to** Tamil Nadu 123/3 in 18 ovs (Nishaanth 35, Aparajith 29 n.o)

Soccer updates

Chelsea's new manager Thomas Tuchel (R) celebrates the 2-0 win over Burnley on Sunday | AFP

First victory for Tuchel

AFP @ London

CESAR Azpilicueta and Marcos Alonso produced stunning finishes as Chelsea beat toothless Burnley 2-0 on Sunday to earn their first win of the Thomas Tuchel era.

The former PSG boss was brought in to replace Frank Lampard last week with a brief to haul stuttering Chelsea back into the race for the Champions League spots. He endured a frustrating goalless draw against Wolves at Stamford Bridge in midweek but two moments of magic from Azpilicueta and forgotten man Alonso mean the German now has four points from six. Chelsea are now seventh in the table. Meanwhile, Manchester United played out a goalless draw at Arsenal on Saturday.

EXPRESS READ

Archery WC probables out

KOLKATA: The Archery Association of India (AAI) shortlisted a core group of 24 compound men's and women's archers, who will take part in the selection trials of the first three stages of the World Cup. The 24 archers were picked after a trial held in Delhi. "70 compound archers including 32 men and 38 women who scored 695+ in men and 680+ in women were eligible for the trials," AAI said in a statement.

Vaccination plan for Pak players

KARACHI: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is formulating a policy next month on how to vaccinate its players against Covid-19, its CEO Wasim Khan said on Sunday. Khan said several options were under consideration and advice has been sought. "As of now, no Test playing nation has taken a final decision on getting their players vaccinated but we are looking at some options," Khan said.

Messi's contract worth 555 mn

BARCELONA: Lionel Messi's most recent contract with Barcelona is worth up to 555 million euros over four seasons, the *El Mundo* newspaper reported on Sunday. The Spanish daily said it had access to the document Messi signed with the Catalan club in 2017, which included fixed incomes and variables that could reach nearly 138 million euros each season. It is the most expensive contract paid to an athlete.

Chennaiyin go down to Hyderabad

VASOC: Hyerabad FC showed their mental resolve by securing a 2-0 win over Chennaiyin FC in their Indian Super League encounter at the Tilak Maidan, Vasco on Sunday. The result has taken them to third in the table. Goals from Fran Sandaza (28) and Joel Chianese (83) made it look like a comfortable win but Chennaiyin pushed them till the end. In another match, Kerala Blasters lost 2-3 to ATK Mohun Bagan.

AHEAD OF WORLDS

Youth boxers set for Euro challenge

ANMOL GURUNG @ Chennai

AFTER a period of a lull since last summer, Indian youth boxers are likely to be a busy lot in the coming days. The International Boxing Association (AIBA), on January 26, confirmed that the Youth Men's and Women's World Championships will be held in Poland in April.

With the Worlds on the horizon, the youth boxers in the country, who have been training in Rohtak since late last year, are set to travel to Montenegro for an international tournament in mid-February. This exposure tour could help them gauge where they stand.

A total of 20 boxers (10 men & women each), along with coaches and support staff, are expected to be part of the International Tournament Adriatic Pearl (February 16-22) in Budva. Trials had been conducted recently and the No 1 boxers from each weight category have been picked. The coaches are stoked to get this opportunity and are hopeful of a good show ahead of the Worlds. "Boxers have done well in recent years. Our preparations have been going smoothly. Let's see how far they can go this time around," **Bhaskar Bhatt**, head coach of youth women, said. We've girls from five or six weight categories, who we feel can put up a strong show during the World Championships. We feel they have the potential to bag gold."

Bhatt's positivity stems from the fact that the women boxers have been heavy-hitters at the top level in recent years. Having excelled at the youth level, they have gone on to thrive at the elite level. Even during the lockdown, Bhaskar and the other coaches had conducted online classes. "That (online classes) enabled the boxers to maintain fitness, mental and physical. I can't say the fitness was top-notch, but we resumed (camp) in good condition. Even after joining the camp, they were undergoing online classes while in quarantine. Having begun camp from October, now we feel they are in solid shape," Bhatt noted. Gitika (48 kg) is a talent to watch out for, according to coach. And there are several other international medallists in the team.

Despite virtual classes, coaches have faced an uphill task to bring the pugilists back to top shape. The boxers were initially barred from sparring. That meant pugilists were unable to express themselves freely and be 100 per cent.

"We are yet to be 100 per cent. Sparring during training was not possible earlier so that has affected our boxers' game. Most of the boxers' performance was down, but we were confident that we could bring it up through proper training," Abhishek Malviya, coach of youth men, said. Malviya's mantra has been to carry training in a systematic manner and rely on patience.

The men had last taken part at a meet in Vilnius, Lithuania last March A few participants from that tour will be part of this upcoming meet.

Government of Karnataka
WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION
O/O Engineer in Chief , WRDO, Ananda Rao Circle, Bengaluru.
No:CE/WRDO/Hyd-Unit/NHP/IT/2020-21 Date: 29.01.2021
INVITATION FOR TENDER UNDER NHP
Tenders are invited for Supply & Installation of IT Equipments (Computers, Printers, Photocopier & A0 Scanner with print) under National Hydrology Project. Your are requested to provide your offer on or before **3.00 P.M**. on **15.02.2021.** Further Details are available on the **website: www.waterresources.kar.inc.in**
Sd/- Project Director, National Hydrology Project, Bengaluru

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
Office of the Chief Engineer (Design), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru-09.
No. BWSSB/CE(Design)/ACE(QA)/TA/1317/2020-21 Date: 28.01.2021
TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Only through e-Procurement Portal)
BWSSB invites **Tenders** in Two Stage Tender system from reputed manufacturers for **"Procurement of 20,000 Nos. of 15mm dia Multi Jet Class "B" Magnetic Type Water Meters conforming to IS:779/1994 or ISO:4064/1 with its latest amendments."**
Amount put to tender: **Rs. 2,98,75,000/-.**
Last date and Time for receipt of tenders will be on **10.02.2021 before 16.00 hrs.** Date of opening of Technical bids will be on **12.02.2021 at 12.00 Hrs.** The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-Procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.
Sd/-
Chief Engineer (Design)
DIPR/DDU/YC/2623 /2020-21
STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

MOTHER DAIRY
(A Unit of: Karnataka Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Ltd)
G.K.V.K. POST, YELAHANKA, BANGALORE-560065
e-mail: admin@motherdairykmf.in Tele. No. 080-22179005 / 78
INVITATION FOR TENDERS
Mother Dairy A unit of Karnataka Milk Federation, Bangalore invites tenders for processing/packing of UHT (white milk, flavoured milk, spiced butter milk, lassi, cream etc) in tetra packs on Bi-ennial Rate contract basis from eligible tenderers through e-procurement portal

Tender No	MD/ADMIN /T-22/2020-21
Access to E- Tender Documents From	01-02-2021
Tender Prebid Meeting	05-02-2021
Last Date and Time of Submission of Tender	15-02-2021 upto 05:30PM
Date and Time for opening of Technical Tender	17-02-2021 at 11:00AM
Tender EMD amount	Rs.2,50,000/-

Tenderers may obtain further information from e-procurment website https://eproc.karanataka.gov.in.
Sd/- Director, Mother Dairy

Government of Karnataka
KARNATAKA RURAL ROAD DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
IIIrd Floor, Grameenabhivrudhi Bhavana, Ananda Rao Circle, Bangalore-560 009.
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No. KRRDA/Tech/05/DPR/TND/2020-21/5189 Date:29.01.2021
TENDER NOTIFICATION
Karnataka Rural Road Development Agency (KRRDA) intends to empanel Consultants for Providing Consulting Services for Detailed Surveying and Preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPR) for the Road and Long Span Bridge works taken up by KRRDA. For more details visit website **https://eproc.karantaka.gov.in**
Sd/-
Tendering Officer
KRRDA, Bengaluru.
DIPR/DDU/JA/2628/2020-21
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Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

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(ಇ-ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ)
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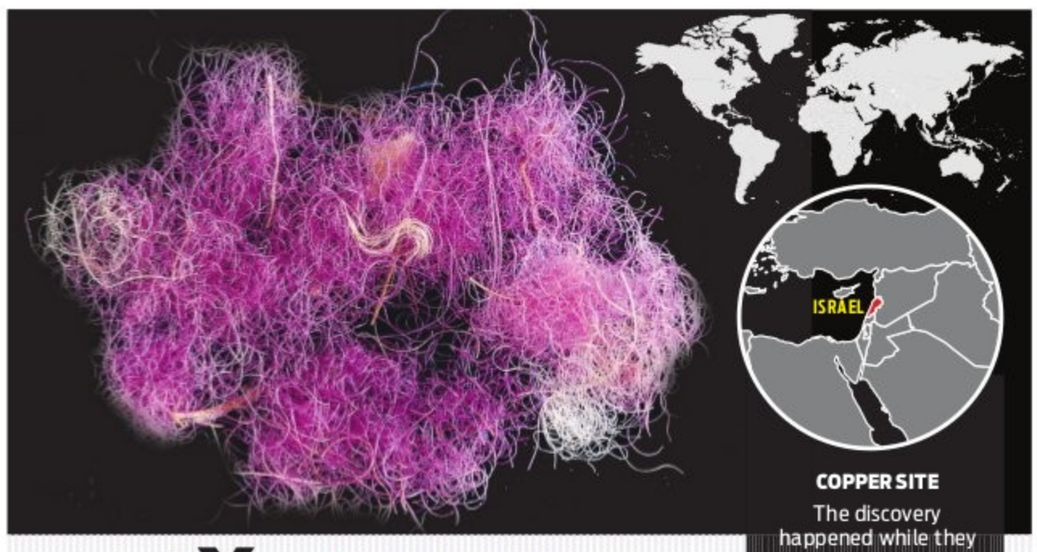
One in five sailors serving with China's submarine force, especially nuclear subs in the disputed South China Sea, are experiencing mental health problems. A study by Naval Medical University in Shanghai of more than 500 servicemen and officers claims to be the first of its kind to highlight the psychological problems the troops working in the disputed waterway are facing.



EXFILE • ARCHAEOLOGY

Israelis find 'royal purple' fabric dating back to Iron Age

Israeli researchers said they had found scraps of fabric coloured with a purple dye dating from the eras of King David and King Solomon in the south of the country

WHY IS THIS DYE IMPORTANT?

"The dye, which is produced from species of mollusc found in the Mediterranean, over 300 kilometres from Timna, is often mentioned in the Bible and appears in various Jewish and Christian contexts," the Israel Antiquities Authority, Tel Aviv University and Bar Ilan University said in a joint statement

Until the current discovery, we had only encountered mollusc-shell waste and potsherds with patches of dye, which provided evidence of the purple industry in the Iron Age. Now, for the first time, we have direct evidence of the dyed fabrics themselves, preserved for some 3,000 years

Naama Sukenik, from the Israel Antiquities Authority

BIBLICAL KINGDOM

Erez Ben-Yosef from Tel Aviv University's archaeology department said the finds should "revolutionise our concepts of nomadic societies in the Iron Age". He identified the Timna site as part of "the biblical Kingdom of Edom, which bordered the kingdom of Israel to the south. The new finds reinforce our assumption that there was an elite at Timna, attesting to a stratified society"

VALUABLE TODAY

Also called Tyrian purple, after the city in southern Lebanon known for its production, the pigment is still highly valued today

Israeli researchers said they had found scraps of fabric coloured with a purple dye dating from the eras of King David and King Solomon in the south of the country

COPPER SITE

The discovery happened while they were examining coloured textiles from **Timna Valley**, an ancient copper production district

1,000 BCE

Direct radiocarbon dating confirms that the finds date from approximately 1000 BCE, corresponding to the biblical monarchies of David and Solomon in Jerusalem

MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD

It was the first time purple-dyed Iron Age textiles had been found in Israel or the Levant. The colour was associated with royalty, nobility and priests and the dye "often cost more than gold", said Naama Sukenik, curator of organic finds at the Israel Antiquities Authority

Africa virus toll vastly undercounted

RESEARCH

NAIROBI: Africa appeared to have weathered the Covid-19 pandemic better than other continents, defying initial alarmist predictions of the novel coronavirus wreaking havoc impoverished nations with weak healthcare systems. But recent data from a Zambian morgue suggests the continent is vastly undercounting its Covid-19 deaths.

The Financial Times reported that 70 bodies out of 364 at the University Teaching Hospital morgue in Lusaka, Zambia, tested postive for Covid-19, as per researchers.

If our data are generalisable, the impact of Covid-19 in Africa has been vastly underestimated, wrote the authors of a paper that has not yet been peer-reviewed. Lawrence Mwananyanda, who led the research by Boston University School of Public Health, told the Times that the data cast doubt on the claim that the coronavirus had "somehow skipped" Africa.

A second deadlier wave is underway in the continent. "In Lusaka now, everybody knows someone who has died of Covid or who is in the hospital with Covid," Dr Mwananyanda was quoted as saying.

Covid effect: Mental health leave for kids

HEALTH

WUHAN: The coronavirus pandemic has multiplied the pressures on kids — many have spent almost a year doing remote learning, isolated from their friends and classmates. The portion of children's emergency-room visits related to mental health in the United States was 44% higher in 2020, compared with the year before.

State lawmakers in the US are increasingly seeking more support for kids. This year, legislation proposed in Utah and Arizona would add mental or behavioral health to the list of reasons students can be absent from class, similar to staying out with a physical illness. Similar laws have passed in Oregon, Maine, Colorado and Virginia in the past two years. Offering mental health days can help children and parents communicate and prevent struggling students from falling behind in school or ending up in crisis, said Debbie Plotnick, vice president of the nonprofit advocacy group Mental Health America. Plotnick said mental health days can be even more effective when paired with mental health services in schools.

"We know that this year has been extra hard, and we know that it's hard for young people," Plotnick said. "That's why it's so essential that students feel comfortable to come forward and say ... 'I need to take some actions to support my mental health.'" Theresa Nguyen, a licensed clinical social worker, said she's concerned about the potential long-term mental and academic effects that students may face from the pandemic.

In addition to growing reports of anxiety and depression, Nguyen said, many students say they don't feel like they're absorbing class material virtually and they're not getting enough support. "They feel like, 'Nobody cares that I'm struggling, so I'm basically being communicated to that I need to just deal with it by myself,'" said Nguyen, Mental Health America's chief program officer. "And for a lot of youth, that means increased self-harm and suicide."

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C V JACOB (87)

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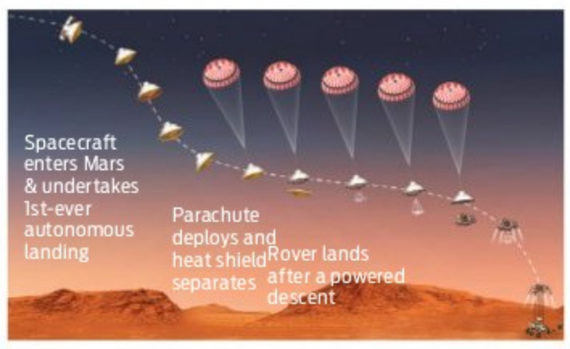
AT ST. PETER'S & ST. PAUL'S CHURCH KOLENCHERY

SORROWING FAMILY
WIFE: ALEYAMMA JACOB
CHILDREN: DR.VIJU JACOB, AJU JACOB, ELVY NINAN
SILVY MANI, MINNA GEORGE, MINNIE SAJEEV
DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW: MINI VARGHESE, REHANA JACOB
SONS-IN-LAW: NINAN PHILIP, MANI VARGHESE
GEORGE MATHAI, DR. SAJEEV GEORGE

MANAGEMENT & STAFF, Synthite GROUP

NASA ROVER ON FINAL STRETCH OF MARS TRIP


Spacecraft enters Mars & undertakes 1st-ever autonomous landing
Parachute deploys and heat shield separates
Rover lands after a powered descent

The illustration shows the planned steps of a descent to the Red Plant on February 18 by NASA's Mars 2020 Perseverance rover | NASA

ASTRONOMY

WASHINGTON: NASA's Mars 2020 Perseverance rover mission is set to complete a 470.8-million-kilometre next month as it is scheduled to land on Mars on February 18.

Launched on July 30 last year, the rover is currently closing that distance at 2.5 kilometres per second, NASA said.

Once at the top of the Red Planet's atmosphere, an action-packed seven minutes of descent awaits – complete with temperatures equivalent to the surface of the Sun, a supersonic parachute inflation, and the first ever autonomous guided landing on Mars. Only then can the rover search Jezero Crater for signs of ancient life and collect samples that will eventually be returned to Earth.

Jezero Crater is believed to be the perfect place to search for signs of ancient microbial life. Billions of years ago, the now-bone-dry 45-kilometre-wide basin was home to an actively-forming river delta and lake filled with water.

The rock and regolith (broken rock and dust) that Perseverance's Sample Caching System collects from Jezero could help answer fundamental questions about the existence of life beyond Earth.

Two future missions currently in the planning stages by NASA, in collaboration with ESA, will work together to bring the samples back to Earth, where they will undergo in-depth analysis by scientists around the world using equipment far too large and complex to send to Mars.

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MONDAY

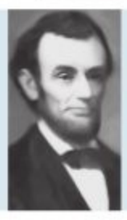
DAY'S DIARY

Thirteenth amendment

On this day in 1865, President Abraham Lincoln signed the 13th amendment to the Constitution of the United States that formally abolished slavery

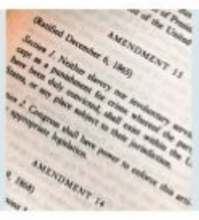
TIMELINE

The amendment did not pass in the House until January 31, 1865. The joint resolution was presented to Lincoln after that



A DREAM COMES TRUE

Assassinated by John Wilkes Booth, Lincoln died on April 15, 1865. The amendment was not ratified by the required number of states until December 6, 1865



UNDER THE AMENDMENT

The 13th Amendment declared that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

Team Gaalipata 2 to head to Kazakhstan

PG 4

On the saddle

Like many others who have taken to cycling during the pandemic, looks like actor Diganth Manchale is no different. Sharing photographs of himself during a ride, he captioned them, "Pedal on." While comments from fans and friends were encouraging, one of the comments had many in splits. "You should never be a peddler!"

Annual ritual

On Sunday, the city's Jan-Feb babies got together to celebrate their birthdays. This annual ritual saw celebrity Aquarians meet at the newly-launched Badmaash at UB City. Fitness instructor Wanitha Ashok whose birthday was on Jan. 31, jewellers Triveni Vinod and C Vinod Hayagriv, among others spent an afternoon having fun. "We had a blast. Heads turned, many strangers walked up and asked how they too can join the group," Ashok let us in.

Growing their own veggies, meditating or simply spending dedicated time with pets... B'lureans are opting out of the fast-paced pre-pandemic life to take time and smell the roses

LIFE IN THE SLOW LANE

MONIKA MONALISA

IN the 2010 movie, *Eat Pray Love*, Julia Roberts was in Italy when she fell in love with the art of doing nothing. A decade later, when the world is going through a pandemic, people are realising the value of this art which is relevant now more than ever. Whether it's growing your own vegetables, taking to meditation or spending dedicated time with pets...slow living is the new lifestyle mantra that is catching up with the city's inhabitants.

Naved Qureshi, a model, explains that slow living is basically enjoying the small pleasures of life. "I am sure hardly anyone would remember the last time they stopped to smell a flower. We are so preoccupied in our lives that we forget to take time off to spend for ourselves, to think or simply do nothing at all," says Qureshi, who quit his corporate job a couple of months before the lockdown to pursue modelling. Although an avid preacher of conscious living, Qureshi admits he hardly gets time to live his beliefs to the fullest. "I used to meditate before but its is only during the lockdown that I consciously started dedicating 45 minutes towards it. This gives that time I can spend with myself," he adds.

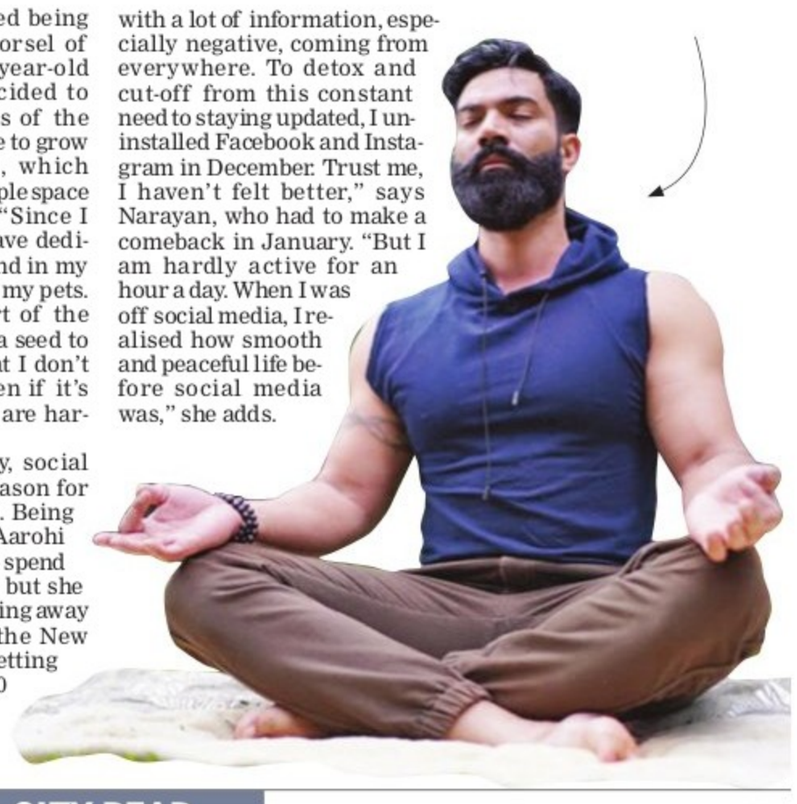
The reason behind the drastic change in lifestyle is the harsh reality that they came across during Covid. For some of them, even working from home helped reevaluate priorities. For instance, Sohini Bagchi, who works in the retail sector and volunteered for various Covid relief programmes, witnessed the ground reality first-hand which is when she decided that it was time to slow down. "When migrant workers were returning home, I saw one woman feeding food to streeties. Two kids came running to her, asking for food. When she refused them since it was dog food, the children mentioned that they had not had anything to eat for the past few days and would be happy with any little food that would be available. At that moment, I started being grateful for every morsel of food I eat," says 40-year-old Bagchi. She also decided to move to the outskirts of the city to have more space to grow her own vegetables, which would also provide ample space for her pets to play. "Since I work from home, I have dedicated hours that I spend in my garden as well as with my pets. The joy of being part of the journey– from being a seed to fruit – is so much that I don't mind showing off even if it's just two chillies that are harvested," she laughs.

According to many, social media is the main reason for losing out on me-time. Being a public figure, actor Aarohi Narayan is required to spend time on social media, but she took a bold step by getting away from Instagram till the New Year's and is not regretting at all. "The year 2020 took a huge toll on our mental health with a lot of information, especially negative, coming from everywhere. To detox and cut-off from this constant need to staying updated, I uninstalled Facebook and Instagram in December. Trust me, I haven't felt better," says Narayan, who had to make a comeback in January. "But I am hardly active for an hour a day. When I was off social media, I realised how smooth and peaceful life before social media was," she adds.

To detox and cut-off from this constant need to staying updated, I uninstalled Facebook and Instagram in December. Trust me, I haven't felt better
Aarohi Narayan, actor

Since I work from home, I have dedicated hours that I spend in my garden as well as with my pets. The joy of being part of the journey– from being a seed to fruit – is so much
Sohini Bagchi, professional

We are so preoccupied in our lives that we forget to take time off to spend for ourselves, to think or simply do nothing at all
Naved Qureshi, model



CITY READ

SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

Coastal Machali, a seafood restaurant, has organised a festival from Feb. 1 to Feb. 28 at its restaurant located on Residency Road. The first fish dish during the festival will be served free. "Fish lovers did not have the opportunity to enjoy a variety of seafood due to the pandemic. We have taken the initiative to organise a food festival to cater to the palate of seafood-loving gourmands," says Vinay, the partner of the restaurant. All types of seafood delicacies, including sea fish, crab and squid, will be served during the festival.

MAKING A SPLASH

As temperatures soar, the cool waters can finally provide some respite to swimmers as pools have been given the go-ahead to reopen after almost a year

SANATH PRASAD

The effect of the lockdown seems to finally be wearing off, with many spaces, including theatres and swimming pools, getting a green signal to re-open. The Ministry of Home Affairs which cleared all decks for swimming centres to open for the public across the country from Feb. 1, has some swimmers in the city ready to pull out their swim gear. The Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for the opening was issued on Saturday. SR Sindia, vice-president of Karnataka Swimming Association says, "Fitness enthusiasts were urging me to open the pool before Feb. 1. We will follow the guidelines from the government and act accordingly." Allaying fears of chemicals being a fresh risk for Covid, Sindia added that the association has submitted a research by the World Health Organization on the safety of chlorine content in swimming pools to the state government. "The chemical proportion is always standard and is not a cause for any sort of infection," he adds.

Pools usually witness large crowds during summer, with kids thronging the water to get some respite from the heat as well as pick up and fine-tune their skills. However, centers are now skeptical if they will see the same trend as previous years owing to the on-going pandemic. Nihar Ameen, Dronacharya awardee, who is associated with Dolphin Aquatics, says, "The competitive batch had no safety concerns. But we are now ramping up safety as the public batch is open and needs effective control. We will strictly implement the SOPs issued by the government and ensure there is no single case reported."

At the same time, Latha Mohan, proprietor of Pooja Aquatic Centre in Banashankari has spoken to parents over phone, encouraging them to send their children for swimming lessons. "Most parents are afraid to send them because of the Covid 19 crisis," finds Mohan. In tandem with this, Sumangala M, a parent of an eight-year-old child is unwilling to send her daughter for any water sport-related summer camp. "The vaccination process is still in the initial stages and I believe the public batch crowd is not safe," she says.

Some regular lap swimmers are also worried about the risk of getting infected in water which could affect the health of other family members.

Recreational swimmer Ramesh K says, "I am not willing to go to the pool and risk my children's health. I believe the rate of infection spreading in water is high. The vaccines are here but I will refrain from going to the pool for the next six months."

Besides, the swimming pools at luxury hotels in the city which have been shut too all these months will re-open to guests with strict protocols in place. Amaan Kidwai, general manager, ITC Gardenia, Bengaluru says, "We are in talks with medical professionals and disinfectant experts to enhance the existing hygiene and cleaning protocols."

DESIGN DILEMMAS

A shake-up of brand identity or another unwarranted issue? The talk over the Myntra logo highlights the tightrope that brands have to walk between art and sensibilities

SANATH PRASAD

What's in a logo? A lot, say many after the design of e-commerce brand Myntra has created a stir on social media. This, after a complaint from Naaz Patel, founder of NGO Avesta Foundation, who deemed the logo offensive to women, demanding its removal. This has now sparked a debate about objectifying women in brand graphics. While one group is debating this, another is wondering if the complainant has triggered an unwarranted issue out of the logo.

Harish Bijoor, a brand specialist, says, "The logo is a very intricate part of a brand and forms a critical part of the brand identity kit. When a logo needs to be changed, it is certainly pressure on the brand. It is a shake-up to the identity of the brand. However, this kind of tumult on social media has put Myntra on the backfoot. The logo has been around for five years and nobody has seen anything wrong with it. But with the controversy, the sales will boom for Myntra rather than go the other way."

Experts in the advertising field also believe that graphic designers value art and creativity to elevate the brand image, but not to hurt the sentiments of society in any way. Malavika Harita, former CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi, says, "Perception is everything. But people have gone a little overboard this time. When you design a logo, you look at the graphics and the visual appeal. Logos need to be looked at on these lines. You don't nitpick and create unwarranted negative attention. I don't think the creator of this logo had anything like this in mind. Generally, when brands receive such criticism, they back off and think through it. If Myntra feels the logo is right, they needn't change it."

Brinda Adige, an activist, believes that the right to critique comes with responsibility. "There is a need for putting things across in a dignified way when something is offensive or derogatory. The complainant need not digress and stoop when he/she wants to raise an issue," she says.

As the brand is executing a new logo, many netizens are all over the letter 'M', citing its resemblance to intimate parts of women. Srilatha Batliwala, women's rights researcher and scholar says, "When seen together as one word, there is nothing inherently offensive in the logo. But seen individually, the letter 'M' could be viewed as offensive. It is worrying though that any artistic / design representation can be viewed as offensive by someone, somewhere, and this could promote an unhealthy kind of public censorship and curb creative expression across the board."

According to brand designer Pallavi Nopany, shadows and colours should also be considered. "Going by this recent incident, designers have to be careful. It's always good to send the logo to a few people to see if there is anything offensive," she says.

(Inputs from Monika Monalisa)

The logo is a very intricate part of a brand and forms a critical part of the brand identity kit. When a logo needs to be changed, it is certainly pressure on the brand
Harish Bijoor, brand specialist

Perception is everything. But people have gone a little overboard this time. When you design a logo, you look at the graphics and the visual appeal
Malavika Harita former CEO, Saatchi & Saatchi

When you want to raise a complaint, raise it in a manner that is respectful. You have to maintain your self-respect while reporting offence
Brinda Adige, activist

Illustration: EXPRESS

WHAT WHEN WHY WHERE

LOL EVENINGS

Get ready for an evening filled as witty, wacky, and weird comedy by Bengaluru boys, Anand Rathnam, Joteen Patro, Gautham Govindan talk about the misery of lockdown, working from home, and other subjects. **When:** Feb 1- Feb 25, 8 pm **Where:** Bistro Claytopia, Koramangala **Details:** 95387 06203

CLICK AWAY

An elaborate package of computer programming, 3D modeling, mobile and web development for kids is just a click away. Each course is of five days with a duration of one hour sessions each day. **When:** Feb 1- Feb 24, 10 am **Where:** Zoom **Details:** bookmyshow.com

SWEAT IT OUT

Enroll your kids in gymnastic classes to keep them fit and healthy. Only four kids are allowed per session. **When:** Feb 1 to April 28, 4 pm **Where:** The Studio by LDVS, Wheeler Road **Details:** 98450 15123

SMART WATCH

FLiX, powered by Beetel has announced its foray into the Smart Wearables category with a range of smartwatches with S1 Smartwatch. It measures real-time body temperature and heart rate. It is priced at ₹2,499. **Available at:** Amazon India and retail stores

SIGN UP FOR THE ADVANCED POTTERY WORKSHOP TO LEARN DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES AT LAHE LAHE. WHEN: FEB 1 - FEB 28, 10:30 AM- 1 PM DETAILS: 9886294444

IN BRIEF

This Tuesday, experience a heart-plucking session of poetry, and good company at Lahe Lahe. The theme is adapt.

Where: Lahe Lahe, Indiranagar

When: Feb 2

Details: 9886294444

FUN WORKOUT

Join the group zumba session and experience a complete digital fitness session. The duration of the session is 30 mins. **When:** Jan 28- Feb 28 **Details:** 9062493160

GET CREATIVE

Get your hands on the Mandala art, a one-page spotlight workshop. Learn the art therapy for product ideas like brochures, bookmarks, posters, wall paintings, and more. **When:** Feb 1- Mar 31, 6 pm

Where: Online

Details: bookmyshow.com

TUNE-IN

It is never too late to say sorry. Join this event to experience 'I am Sorry tunes', a music genre to express yourself with your loved ones **When:** Feb 1- Feb 28, 10 am **Where:** Online **Details:** bookmyshow.com

POP MUSIC

My Ex Ate My Guitar, an acoustic trio is here to take you into the world of pop and rock music. From Michael Jackson to Eric Clapton, from Coldplay to Rihanna to Adam Levine, they have got you covered. **When:** Feb 4, 8:30 pm **Where:** Hard Rock Cafe, St Marks Road **Details:** 4124 2222

QUICK FIX

What's cooking

IN YOUR KITCHEN?

We are hungry for recipes with minimum ingredients and maximum flavours. Share your quick-fix with us, along with step-by-step photos, at cityexpresschn@gmail.com.

CHEESE MASALA PAV

INGREDIENTS

- **Butter:** 2 tbsp
- **Onion:** 2, chopped
- **Tomato:** 3, chopped
- **Chilli:** 1
- **Ginger-garlic paste:** 1 tsp
- **Capsicum:** 1/2, chopped
- **Pav bhaji masala and red chilli powder:** 1 tsp each
- **Salt** ■ **Pav:** 6
- **Mozarella cheese**, grated

METHOD

- Caramelise the onion on the tava with butter and add chilli, tomato, capsicum and ginger garlic paste. Add spices and cook for three minutes.
- Slice the pav in half and spread the masala mixture. Add grated mozarella cheese.
- Place tava on a low heat and slather some butter on it (you can add garlic and chilli flakes).
- Once the butter melts, place the pav and let it toast for 5 minutes.
- Spread butter on top of the pav and flip to toast this side. Once toasted, serve hot.

— Poonam Chhabria, Bengaluru

FIT BIT

DIRGA PRANAYAMA

(THREE-PART BREATHING)

In Sanskrit, 'Dirga' means 'long', 'prana' means 'life force', 'yama' means 'restraint' or 'ayama' means 'extend' or 'draw out'. In this, both inhalation and exhalation happen in three layers. It begins with relaxation of the abdomen, which expands on an inhale. After the pelvis and abdomen fill, the chest expands passively as the breath fills it, then the collar bones lift and expand. When the lungs have filled up, the yogi takes in a little more air, then exhales from the top of the lungs to the abdomen in reverse order of the inhale, finally contracting the abdominal muscles to remove all air.

STEPS

- Sit in Sukhasana or lie down in Savasana .
- If you have any back-related problems, lie down and bend your knees.
- Place one hand just over your navel and place the other on your chest just inches below the collar bone.
- Close your eyes and keep your body straight.
- Start inhaling and exhaling naturally, not forced. Do this 15-20 times continuously.
- As you inhale (first step), feel the air filling the abdomen; feel how your belly is filling like a balloon with your hand.
- While exhaling, slowly press your navel in to help your abdomen to drive out air completely out of your belly.
- When you inhale again (second step), fill the abdomen and try to draw some more air and send it to expand the ribcage. Now feel the movement of the ribcage with your hand. Extend your ribcage without any force.
- Exhalation should first shrink your ribs naturally and then push out all the held air from the middle and lower torso.
- Inhale (third step) and fill your rib cage, your abdomen and extend your collarbone and chest for filling in extra air.
- Exhalation should be reversed; first let out the air (held)from your chest, then from the rib cage and finally from the abdomen.
- Repeat the three steps. Each step should be 5-7 times.
- First do it for 5 minutes and if it is comfortable, then extend your time to 10-15 minutes.

BENEFITS

- Increases focus and concentration.
- Improves lung capacity and oxygen intake too.
- Helps relax the nervous system.
- Reduces stress and anxiety.
- Helps in relieving insomnia.
- Regular practice builds stamina.
- Improves the immune system.
- Eases respiratory problems.

LIMITATIONS

- Don't try to extend your lung capacity.
- Breathing should be smooth and not too deep.
- Those who have asthma or any breathing-related difficulties avoid it.
- While practicing, if you feel tired and dizzy, stop and relax.

— by N Elumalai, PhD scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai

SOUND BOARD

CODE SWITCH

This podcast explores how race impacts every part of society — from politics to history, sports and everything in between.

- On Apple Podcasts

MIXED UP

Hosted by sustainability consultant Emma Slade Edmondson and writer Nicole Ocran, the podcast is for mixed race people everywhere and for anyone looking into a deeper insight on race and identity.

- On Apple Podcasts

THE DIVERSITY GAP

Join Bethaney Wilkinson as she explores the gap between good intentions and good impact as it relates to diversity, inclusion and equity.

- On Spotify

HOMO SAPIENS

Alan Cumming and Christopher Sweeney bring you intelligent, informative and fun conversations that represent the interests of LGBTQ+ people around the world.

- On Apple Podcasts

MY WARDROBE MALFUNCTION

Hosted by Susannah Constantine, this is a revealing podcast about our relationship with the items we wear. The ups, downs and a lot more besides.

- On Apple Podcasts

OPRAH'S SUPER SOUL CONVERSATIONS

Awaken, discover and connect to the deeper meaning of the world around you with SuperSoul. Hear Oprah's personal selection of her interviews with thought-leaders, best-selling authors, spiritual luminaries, as well as health and wellness experts

- On Apple Podcasts

POPULAR ON YOUTUBE

KURUKSHETRA

After losing to the Kauravas in a gamble, the Pandavas go into exile and endure hardship for a number of years. Upon their return, conflict arises over the dynastic struggle leading to a war.

- Cast: Darshan, Ambareesh, V Ravichandran

THE VILLAIN

The story revolves around Rama who changes his name to Ravana and goes on to become an international don. Ramu joins hands with's Rama's enemies and tries to unite him with his long-lost mother.

- Cast: Kichcha Sudeep, Shivarajkumar, Amy Jackson

APPU

Appu is a son of a police constable Venkata Swamy. He falls in love with Suchitra who's father is a Police Commissioner of Bengaluru. Appu is involved in a college fight and Suchitra donates her blood to save his life.

- Cast: Puneeth Rajkumar, Rakshitha, Avinash

PREMALOKA

A young boy is in love with his classmate, who turns down his proposal. To impress her, he poses as a mysterious biker to make her fall in love with him.

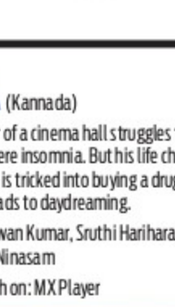
- Cast: V Ravichandran, Juhi Chawla, Tiger Prabhakar

Scan this QR code to find out how your favourite celebs are coping with the lockdown.

WHAT'S ON TED TALKS

1 HOW THE FOOD YOU EAT AFFECTS YOUR GUTS BY SHILPA RAVELLA

While we can't control all the factors that go into maintaining a healthy gut microbiome, we can manipulate the balance of our microbes by paying attention to what we eat. Shilpa Ravella shares the best foods for a healthy gut.



2 A STEALTHY REIMAGINING OF URBAN PUBLIC SPACE BY ELIZABETH DILLER

Commercial real estate dominates the streets, carving up open space that once belonged to the public and selling it as a commodity to the highest bidder. Architect Elizabeth Diller takes us on tour of her groundbreaking projects aimed at creating landscapes for the public.

3 URBAN ARCHITECTURE INSPIRED BY MOUNTAINS, CLOUDS AND VOLCANOES BY MA YANSONG

Taking inspiration from nature, architect Ma Yansong designs breathtaking buildings that break free from the boxy symmetry of so many modern cities.

4 YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHERE CAMELS REALLY COME FROM BY LATIF NASSER

Camels are adapted to the desert that it's hard to imagine them living anywhere else. But what if we have them pegged all wrong? What if those big humps, feet and eyes were evolved for a different climate? In this talk, Latif Nasser tells the surprising story of how a strange fossil upended the way he sees camels, and the world.

5 3 KINDS OF BIAS THAT SHAPE YOUR WORLDVIEW BY J MARSHALL SHEPHERD

In an eye-opening talk, meteorologist J. Marshall Shepherd explains how confirmation bias, the Dunning-Kruger effect and cognitive dissonance impact what we think we know — and shares ideas for how we can replace them with something much more powerful: knowledge.

NOW STREAMING

REGIONAL

KGF: CHAPTER 1 (Kannada)

Rocky, a young man, seeks power and wealth in order to fulfil a promise to his dying mother. His quest takes him to Mumbai, where he gets involved with the notorious gold mafia..

Cast: Yash, Anant Nag, Srinidhi Shetty

- Watch on: Amazon Prime

THE WHITE TIGER (Hindi)

An ambitious Indian driver uses his wit and cunning to escape from poverty and rise to the top.

Cast: Adarsh Gourav, Priyanka Chopra, Rajkummar Rao

- Watch on: Netflix

JANAMAITHRI (Malayalam)

The officers at Paramedu police station start an innovative campaign to reach out to the residents of the area. However, things do not go as planned and they land in all sorts of trouble.

Cast: Saiju Kurup, Sruthi Jayan, Vijay Babu, Sabumon Abdusamad

- Watch on: Amazon Prime Video

TUMBBAD (Hindi)

When a family builds a shrine for Hastar, a monster who is never to be worshipped, and attempts to get their hands on his cursed wealth, they face catastrophic consequences.

Cast: Sohum Shah, Ronjini Chakraborty, Mohammad Samad

- Watch on: Amazon Prime Video

HEY JUDE (Malayalam)

Jude, a mathematical genius with poor social skills, visits Goa with his parents after the demise of his aunt. There, his life changes completely after he meets Crystal, a moody musician.

Cast: Nivin Pauly, Trisha, Siddique

- Watch on: Disney+Hotstar

All the streaming apps can be accessed on smartphones and smart TVs with Internet connection.

LUCIA (Kannada)

An usher of a cinema hall struggles to deal with severe insomnia. But his life changes when he is tricked into buying a drug, which leads to daydreaming.

Cast: Pawan Kumar, Sruthi Hariharan, Sathish Ninasam

- Watch on: MX Player

TIME ENNA BOSS (Tamil, series)

An average IT guy is forced to host four time travellers who end up in his house.

Cast: Sanjana Sarathy, Priya Bhavani Shankar, Bharath, Alexander Babu, Alexander Babu

- Watch on: Amazon Prime Video

FOREIGN

YEARLY DEPARTED (English)

Yearly Departed is a hilarious, absurd, life-affirming comedy special, where seven outspoken female comedians lay to rest the year that never seemed to end.

Cast: Sarah Silverman, Tiffany Haddish, Rachel Brosnahan, Natasha Leggero

- Watch on: Amazon Prime Video

CALL MY AGENT! (French: Dix pour cent; series)

At Paris talent firm, A.S.K, agents scramble to keep their star clients happy and their business afloat. Three agents, Mathias, Gabriel and Andréa, juggle one situation to another in circumstances that blend their personal and professional lives.

Cast: Camille Cottin, Fanny Sidney, Grégory Montel, Thibault de Montalembert

- Watch on: Netflix

EUPHORIA: F*CK ANYONE WHO'S NOT A SEA BLOB

Over the Christmas holiday, Jules reflects on the year.

Cast: Hunter Schafer, Maude Apatow, Zendaya

- Watch on: Disney+Hotstar

THE IT CROWD (English)

The show is set in a London office centering around three staff members of its IT department, namely, Maurice, Roy and their department head Jen Barber who knows nothing about IT.

Cast: Richard Ayoade, Katherine Parkinson, Chris O'Dowd, Matt Berry

- Watch on: Netflix

SUBSCRIPTION

Zee 5: ₹ 99 per month

Prime Video: ₹ 129 per month

Disney+Hotstar: ₹ 399 per year

SMALL WONDERS

City-based artist Kirti Basal provides some food for thought with her earrings carrying miniature versions of French fries, Maggie, ice cream and more

MONIKA MONALISA

Kirti Basal loves her food and loves to wear it too. Sounds crazy, right? But this city-based miniature artist has come out with earrings that may just satiate any sort of sweet or salty cravings. French fries, Maggie, ice cream, Nutella... these are just some of the designs that Basal has to offer. Mostly using polymer clay, soft pastels, resin and a set of tools, including a toothbrush for texturing, to churn out these miniatures dishes, Basal has turned this passion into a sort of profession. "It was a hobby that started off with fridge magnets. After that clicked, I wanted to do something more. So, I tried my hand at jewellery making. Since it's sort of different from what's available, people are ready to experiment," says 31-year-old Basal whose products are available on her Instagram page, Hello-Miniverse. She started the page in 2019 and takes most orders on social media. "After the demand went up, I recently started a website on which I have been getting similar traction," says Basal, who is self-taught and mostly does the sculpting out of her home studio.

Speaking about how her journey to the world of miniature art started, she says it's a classic case of a hobby turned profession. "Around two years ago, I had posted a photo of a miniature banana leaf meal on Twitter which got over 11,000 likes, and was shared by celebrities too. At that point, my friends and family suggested I take to making these miniature works full time," she says.

The former digital marketing professional spends around 10 hours a day creating miniatures. But even if there is growing demand for her products, she tries to cap the number of orders to 40 a month. "Finishing an order takes time. I am the only one running the show right now. So I try to keep orders to a minimum so as to retain quality," says Basal, adding that rice dishes take around one to two days because each grain has to be created. The earrings are priced between ₹300 and ₹700 depending on the intricacies of the design.

Idli, dosa, gulab jamun, noodles... she has created them all. But if you are wondering why Basal only sticks to food, she says, "I'm a foodie, so making food miniatures makes me happy." If you think miniature food is all she creates, she corrects that notion immediately. "I cook most of the dishes in my kitchen too," she laughs.

> *Two years ago, I had posted a photo of a miniature banana leaf meal on Twitter which got over 11,000 likes, and was shared by celebrities. That's when I took it up professionally*
>
> – Kirti Basal, artiste

Hoping for dip in Covid cases, film festival waits out pandemic

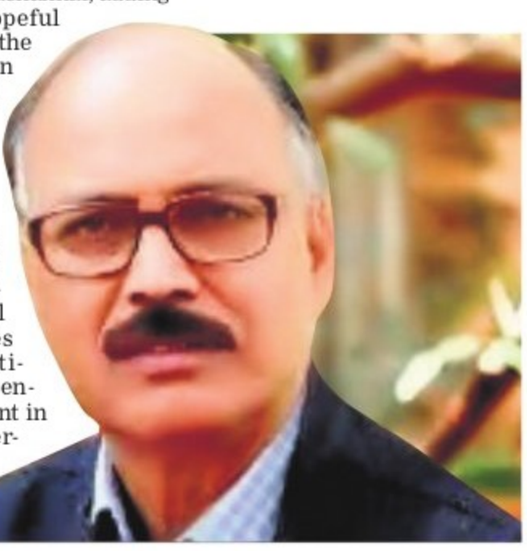
EXPRESS FEATURES

It's good news for movie buffs out there as the 13th edition of the Bengaluru International Film Festival (BIFFes) has announced the last date of submission for films in the competitive category for Asian, Indian and Kannada cinema. The last date of submission is Feb. 8.

The festival, which usually takes place during the end of February, has been postponed to April, hoping that the fear of Covid-19 would get reduced by then. This also means that the festival can be held in a physical form rather than a virtual one. N Vidyashankar, creative director, BIFFes, says the idea of the film festival is to bring like-minded people together who are passionate about movies. "We are sure that we want to screen films at a live gathering rather than do it online. We want dignitaries from various film industries to come under one roof to exchange their knowledge about movies. Moreover, the film industry saw a huge loss last year. This festival is important to create opportunities for people in the industry," says Vidyashankar, adding that he is hopeful that by April, the apprehension to step out would have come down with vaccination in place.

Apart from movies from various genres, the festival also includes film competitions where entries can be sent in for three different genres – Indian, Asian and Kannada. "We are hopeful to get around 60-70 entries in Kannada, 40-50 entries in the Asian category, and 30-40 entries in the Indian category," says Vidyashankar, adding that the competition will have the same rules as before where a jury will choose 12 movies which will be featured in the film festival. Ideally, he says, the last date for competition entries would have been Dec. 2020, but things got delayed because of the uncertainty of the pandemic. One might expect a lukewarm response going by general inhibition, but Vidyashankar is optimistic that the film festival is going to bring more and more movie goers to auditoria.

> *The film industry saw a huge loss last year. This festival is important to create opportunities for people in the industry*
>
> – N Vidyashankar, creative director, BIFFes



CITY READ

BU calls for applications

Bangalore University is calling for applications as 'Library Apprentice Trainees'. This is purely on a temporary basis. Interested candidates with Master of Library & Information Science from any recognised university can download the application format from the BU website. The duly filled application can be submitted to the University Librarian, Bangalore University Library, Jnana Bharathi, Bengaluru, on or before Feb. 6. The interview date will be intimated shortly.

Cricket tourney held

The 'Nitte School of Management Premier League' cricket tournament which took place recently was inaugurated by former chairman of Karnataka Media Academy M A Ponnappa. "If one learns the art of sports management, he will have the potential to work in the sports management sector which is growing rapidly," he said. Dr H C Nagaraj, principal, Nitte Meenakshi Institute of Technology, Bengaluru; Rohit Punja, administrator, Nitte Education Trust; Dr M Venugopal, director, Nitte School of Management were present on the occasion.

Handicrafts mela

Check out the Kala Silk Cotton Expo, where a wide variety of dress materials, sarees and handicraft items from various cities across the country are on display. The fair showcases products of weavers, artisans and craftsmen without the interface of middlemen. Collections from 20 states, including Rajasthan, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh, have been included in the 100 stalls. The exhibition-cum-sale is taking place at Sri Hari Kalyana Mantapa, B S K 3rd Stage, till Feb. 10.

Skul: A Hades prequel?

(This economics graduate spends her leisure time preparing for the zombie apocalypse)

Now that Hades is an award-winning game, the underworld overrun by Olympians has been established as a rogue-like dungeon crawler. Hades features the rebellious Zagreus who runs acrossdungeon rooms, blastingenemies. Before the underworld, there was life. Betwixt these two, lies an almost invisible twodimensional virtual realm. The form it takes is a combination of a roguelike and a platformer. It goes by the name of Skul: The Hero Slayer. While Skul is in reality not a prequel to Hades, it possesses several features that may credit it as a worthy precursor to the more popular dungeon-crawler.

Skul released last week for the PC, after coming out of Early Access. You play as a skeleton. Not the lazy bones kind of skeleton, but one that was bone to be wild. Skul sets out on a risky adventure to dash and slash through evil humans that haunt his realm and rescue his king from captivity.

Like Hades, Skul employs permadeath — which means that you start from the start every time your HP reduces to zero. Your shame lands you on the platform with a Witch, who sells you increasingly expensive upgrades to your 'skull, bone and spirit'. You gain these creatively named upgrades (there's one called fracture prevention which has helped me the most so far) by earning the treasured Dark Quartz, which may be obtained by destroying skilled enemies.

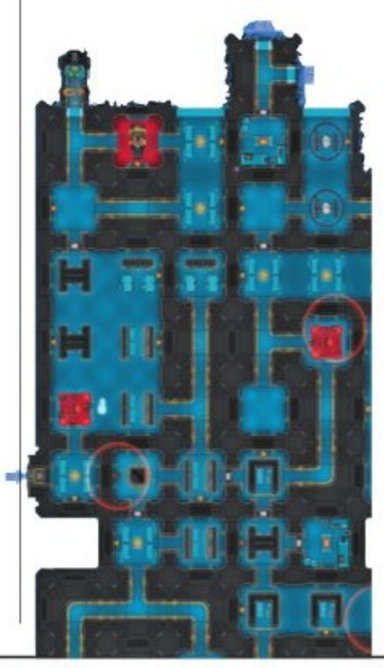
As is with the protagonists of action-adventure games, Skul employs a fair bit of skullduggery to make combat consistently exciting. To begin with, Skul's dash and slash action will keep you entertained. The enemies cowering with sad quips will make you chuckle, the way you do at a meme. But quite suddenly, the action escalates. Skul can throw his skull at enemies in a powerful action. He also possesses a special 'quintessence' power. The otherwise modest seeming skeleton suddenly acquires stunning new abilities. Like energy blasts, increased melee attack impacts and crit damage.

While the fun visuals trick you into playing reckless, without a strategy — the permadeath ultimately hurts us. Unlike Hades, which provides us worthy upgrades to rush through rooms, Skul is more punishing. I consider that quite un-'humerus' of them. Skul is fun, buy it while the inaugural sale is still on. Bone-Voyage.

SOLVING PUZZLES ON A SPACESHIP

(Arjun is a gamer, book lover and an all-round renaissance man)

Heat Signature is a game about infiltrating a variety of procedurally-generated spaceships and completing missions



Ten seconds ago, my mission to infiltrate a spaceship in Heat Signature was going quite well. I'd taken out almost every guard — all I had left to do was sneak up behind the last one (who just so happened to be my mission target), complete the set in the next 60 seconds or so, and then the spaceship would be mine. Then the guard turned around as I was creeping up behind him, shot me with a stun gun, carried me to an airlock and threw me out into space.

Now, I'm careening helplessly through the void as a countdown reminds me that I've got about twenty seconds of oxygen left; oh, and only thirty seconds to go before failing the mission. Yeah, not likely that's going to ma- and that's when I saw the 'remote control your pod' blinking in the corner of my screen. No way. No way.

Twenty seconds later, I've remote-controlled my breaching pod to come over and scoop me up before I passed out, and I'm boosting madly back towards the ship I'd just been so unceremoniously ejected from. With less than ten seconds to go before mission failure and no room for subtlety, I manage to somehow slam the pod into the same damn airlock I'd been tossed out of and, as the timer started flashing red, I burst through the doors and took a shot at the guard as he whirled around and...mission complete.

That exact sequence happened less than thirty minutes into my first play of Heat Signature. It almost seems counterproductive to say anything else about Heat Signature – you almost certainly already know if this is a game for you or not. That said, for anyone still on the fence, Heat Signature is a game about infiltrating a variety of procedurally-generated spaceships and completing various missions. There's a bigger picture involving the liberation of bases from various domineering factions, and every character you play has their own personal goals and motivations, but don't be fooled — at its heart, Heat Signature is a puzzle game.

Every time you successfully rendezvous with an airlock and the ship opens up before you — that's the puzzle you've got to solve. Do you have the tools to deal with it? There's a lot more to this game, but it doesn't really seem like it. Various enemy types and abilities, various environmental hazards, new and better weapons and abilities — all of those are just components in the jigsaw that awaits you with every mission. And that's honestly the best thing about Heat Signature — the fact that each mission is effectively a giant Rube Goldberg machine of possibilities, and you parachute into the chaos with whatever set of tools you want and set it off. It's a phenomenal game, and a masterful example of how to do a lot with a little.

WHAT'S NEW?

RESIDENT EVIL: VILLAGE

The footage of Resident Evil Village was released recently. Scheduled for release in May, Village is a direct sequel to the events of Resident Evil 7; and, as far as gameplay is concerned, it looks like it's taking a few pages out of Resident Evil 4's book

HITMAN 3

The third entry in the modern Hitman trilogy brings this arc of Agent 47's story to a close, but not without signing off with a heaping dose of locations filled with hundreds of people to meet,

SMARTADS

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May 21, Jun 8, 18, July 23

Shimla, Manali, Delhi Chandighar 8 Days
Mar 14, Apr 4, 16, May 12, 24

Andaman Islands
5 Days Mar 14, Apr 4

South India with Navagraha
7 Days
Feb 28, Mar 14, Apr 15. 25

Shirdi, Nasik, Kudalasangama Pandarapura 8 Days
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IT'S DESTINATION KAZAKHSTAN FOR TEAM *GAALIPATA 2*

The team of the Yogaraj Bhat-directed romantic drama starring Ganesh, Diganth and Pawan Kumar will be the first from Sandalwood to travel overseas post the start of the pandemic; shooting to resume by February-end

Yogaraj Bhat

Ramesh Reddy

A SHARADHAA

TEAM *Gaalipata 2* will be the first from Sandalwood to head overseas after the Covid-19 outbreak started, and their chosen destination is Kazakhstan. The new portions of the romantic drama, directed by Yogaraj Bhat and produced by Ramesh Reddy, will be shot in February-end. The movie, starring Ganesh along with Diganth and Pawan Kumar in the lead roles, has been shot halfway through. The crew had initially decided on locations in Georgia, Scotland, and a few other places last year, but the pandemic changed the whole plan.

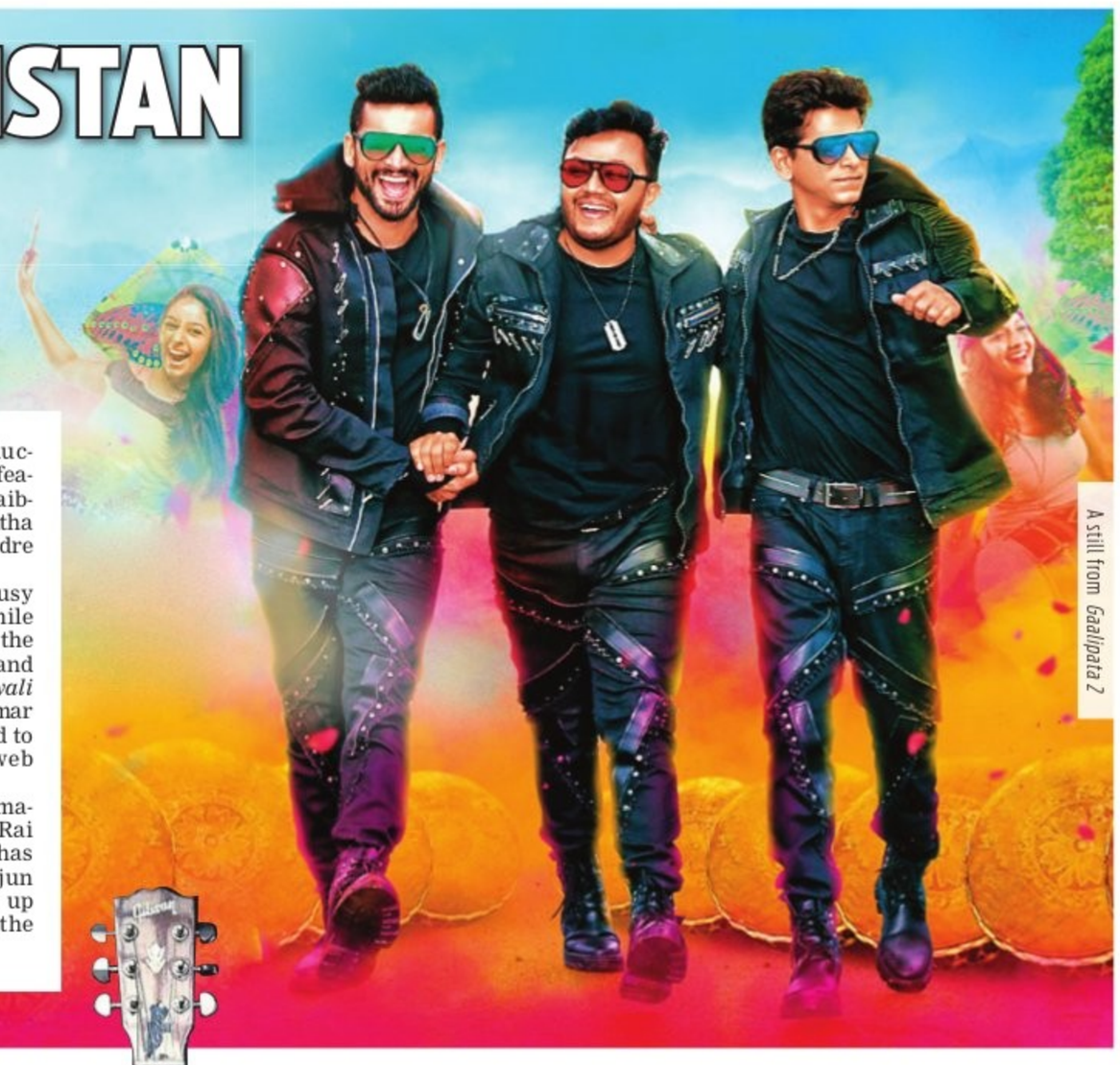
Post lockdown, the team had also thought of going ahead and shooting it in unexplored locations in Karnataka. However, with many countries easing travel restrictions, the makers have chosen to head to Kazakhstan.

In the past few months, the director had also begun the post-production work for *Gaalipata 2,* and has completed the dubbing of some portions of various actors.

The commercial entertainer, made under the banner of Suraj Production, is a multi-starrer featuring, amongothers, Vaibhavi Shandilya, Samyuktha Menon,Sharmiela Mandre and Nishvika Naidu.

Ganesh is currently busy with Suni's *Sakath,* while Diganth just completed the shooting of *MariGold* and *Kshamisi Nimma Katheyali Hanna villa.* Pawan Kumar is camped in Hyderabad to shoot for his Telugu web series.

Gaalipata 2 has cinematography by Santhosh Rai Pathaje, while music has been composed by Arjun Janya, who is teaming up with Yogaraj Bhat for the first time.


A still from *Gaalipata 2*

Raghu Dixit to make his acting debut with *Bang*

CE FEATURES

MUSICIAN Raghu Dixit is making his acting debut with Bang. The composer-singer is a part of the gangster drama helmed by debutant director Sree Ganesh Parashuram. He will be seen opposite Shanvi Srivastava, who is playing the role of a gangster for the first time. *Bang* will be the third production venture of Pooja Vasant Kumar, after the Yogesh-starrer *Naanu adu mattu Saroja,* and Aditi Prabhudeva's *Aana.*

Bang, being made under the banner of UK Production, also features Saathvika in the lead cast. The team has finished the first schedule of the shooting, and both Raghu Dixit and Shanvi are set to join the shooing this month. *Bang* has music composed by Ritvik Muralidhar, while Uday Leela is handling the camera. Editor Vijeth Chandra and sound designer RR Naveen Kumar have also been brought on board the project.

Raghu Dixit

The actor will be seen with Shanvi Srivastava in the gangster drama that also features Saathvika in the lead cast

Saathvika

Shanvi Srivastava

Hrithik Roshan to star in Indian version of *The Night Manager*

CE FEATURES

HRITHIK Roshan will lead the Indian adaptation of popular series, *The Night Manager.* Hrithik will play an Indian version of the Jonathan Pine character, essayed by Tom Hiddleston in the original 2016 limited series based on the 1993 novel by John Le Carre.

The Indian version will start shooting in Mumbai in April. The team plans to go to international locations once travel restrictions are eased.

Sandeep Modi, who co-created and co-directed hit series Aarya last year, will direct the series.

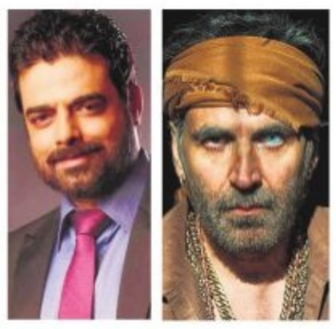
Executives close to the project shared that an official announcement will be out soon. The Indian version is expected to stream on Disney+ Hotstar.

The story follows the night manager of a luxury hotel, a former soldier, who is recruited by a government espionage organisation, to infiltrate the inner circle of an arms dealer.

The original English series starring Hiddleston was adapted by David Farr and directed by Susanne Bier. Alongside Hiddleston, the cast included Olivia Colman, Hugh Laurie, Elizabeth Debicki and Tom Hollander. The series won several Golden Globes, BAFTAs and Primetime Emmys.

The Indian edition starring Hrithik will be produced by Banijay Asia, At the moment, the actor's didn't respond to the reports, while Banijay UK and Banijay Asia have declined to officially comment.

Hrithik Roshan



Abhimanyu Singh to star in *Bachchan Pandey*

CE FEATURES

ACTOR Abhimanyu Singh will play the baddie opposite Akshay Kumar in *Bachchan Pandey.* The film is presently being shot in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. It also stars Kriti Sanon, Jacqueline Fernandez and Arshad Warsi.

Bachchan Pandey is being helmed by Farhad Samji. Originally planned as a *Veeram* remake, the film now follows an original screenplay. It is set to release on Republic Day 2022.

Akshay had earlier shared his first-look from *Bachchan Pandey* on social media.

It may be noted that Abhimanyu, who was last seen in Taish, is also part of Akshay's long-pending *Sooryavanshi*, directed by Rohith Shetty.

Dheeren Ramkumar to wrap shoot for *Shiva 143*

Director Anil Kumar is starting the shooting of the pending song featuring model-dancer Namrata Malla Zenith in a guest appearance

Dheeren Kumar

CE FEATURES

DHEEREN Ramkumar is finally wrapping the shooting for his debut film, *Shiva 143.* The team of the film, directed by Anil Kumar, is starting the filmingof the pending song from Monday, for which they have come with a grand set-up. "I am waiting for the song to be completed as it will help me get rid of my long hair and beard," Dheeren had told *CE* earlier. It is finally taking place after a long delay due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The special song will be featuring the lead hero and senior actor Sadhu Kokila, while model-dancer Namrata Malla Zenith will be making a special appearance. The action romantic drama, made under the banner of Jayanna Films, features Manvitha Kamath in the female lead role, and she is paired opposite Dheeren. It has Arjun Janya composing the music.

Dheeren is yet another actor coming from the Rajkumar clan, comprising his grandfather, his father Ram Kumar, and uncles Shivarajkumar, Puneeth Rajkumar and Raghavendra Rajkumar. *Shiva 143* will be his launch vehicle.

Meanwhile, Dheeren is said to be collaborating with producer Jayanna once again, and the team is looking to finalise a script and the director.

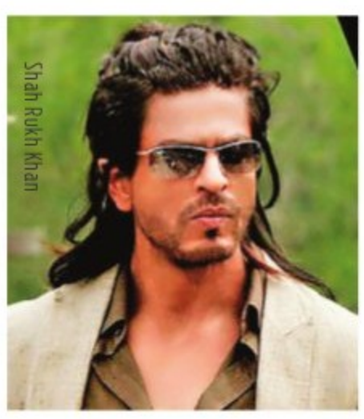
SURYA SHARMA TO STAR IN SRIRAM DALTON'S NEXT

CE FEATURES

ACTOR Surya Sharma was praised for his performance in the crime-thriller series *Undekhi.* According to sources, Surya has signed a new feature film produced by the makers of *Madaari* and *Daas Dev.*

The as-yet untitled film is directed by Rajat Kamal National Film Award winner Sriram Dalton.

Sources revealed the film already went on floor on January 27 in Madhya Pradesh. Surya will be joining the cast from February 3.


Shah Rukh Khan

Shah Rukh Khan films action sequence for his upcoming film *Pathan* in Dubai

CE FEATURES

SHAH Rukh Khan is shooting for his upcoming film *Pathan* in Dubai. The film is directed by Siddharth Anand and also stars Deepika Padukone.

Recently, pictures and videos of the film's shoot emerged on social media. The clips suggest a high-octane action sequence being filmed. In one of them, we see two stuntmen combating on a moving truck.

Pathan will mark Shah Rukh Khan's return to the big screen after three years. His last film, *Zero,* was released in 2018.

Meanwhile, director Siddharth Anand has announced his next film titled *Fighter*. Another action thriller, it will feature Deepika with Hrithik Roshan. The film is rumoured to have a budget of 250 crores.